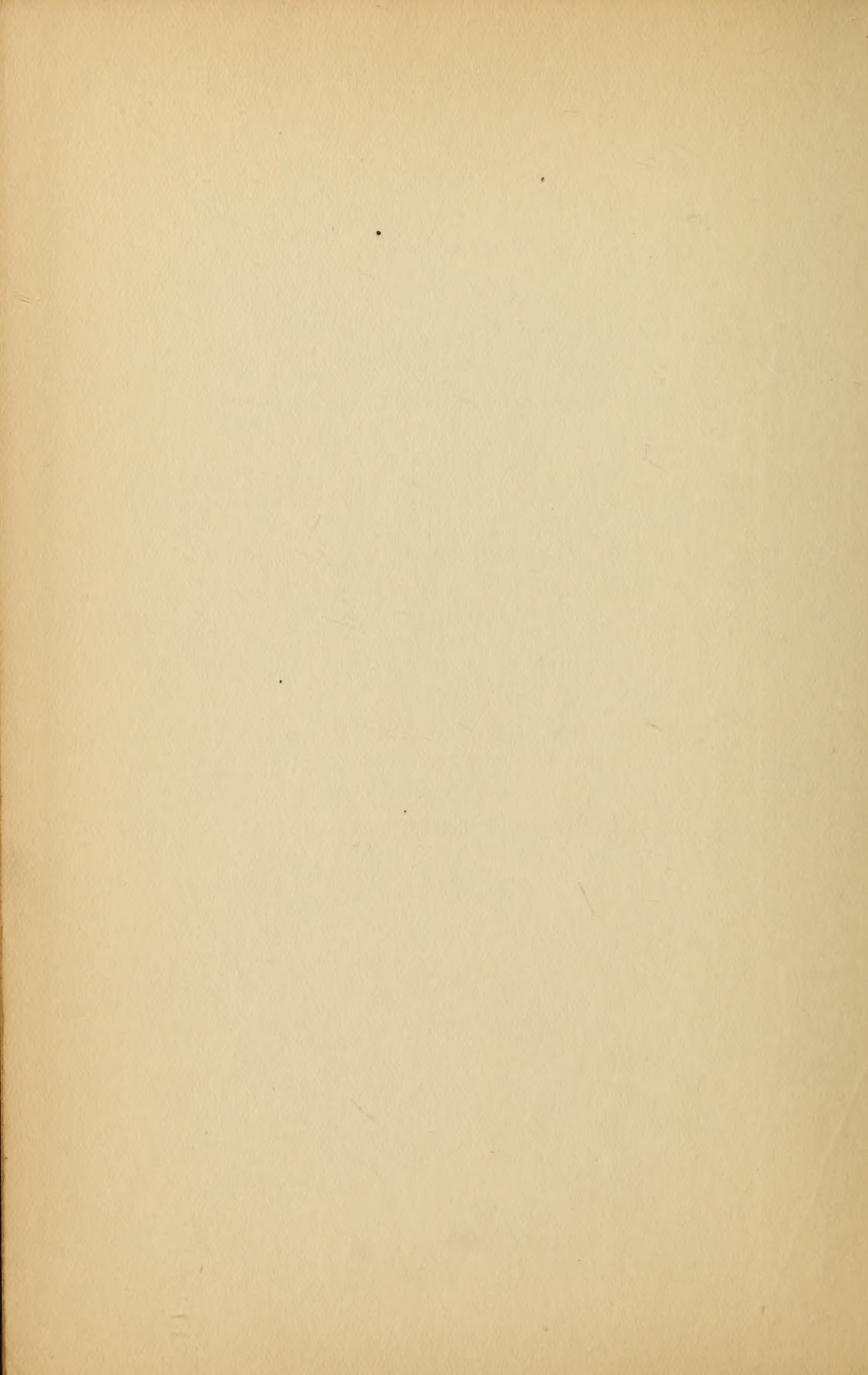


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A SERIES OF MANUALS FOR CATHOLIC
PRIESTS AND STUDENTS

EDITED BY

THE RIGHT REV. MGR. BERNARD WARD
PRESIDENT OF ST. EDMUND'S COLLEGE

AND

THE REV. HERBERT THURSTON, S.J.

It may perchance be asked why God now requires more from Christians under the Gospel than He did from the Jews under the law. The reason is evident ; we give more to God because we owe more. . . . The Jews partook of the manna, we of Christ ; the Jews of the birds of the air, we of the Body of God ; the Jews of the dew of heaven, we of Heaven's Lord.—Salvian, *Ad Ecclesiam*, lib. 2.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

BY THE

RIGHT REV. JOHN CUTHBERT HEDLEY

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EDITORS' PREFACE.

THIS series of Handbooks is designed to meet a need, which, the Editors believe, has been widely felt, and which results in great measure from the predominant importance attached to Dogmatic and Moral Theology in the studies preliminary to the Priesthood. That the first place must of necessity be given to these subjects will not be disputed. But there remains a large outlying field of professional knowledge which is always in danger of being crowded out in the years before ordination, and the practical utility of which may not be fully realised until some experience of the ministry has been gained. It will be the aim of the present series to offer the sort of help which is dictated by such experience, and its developments will be largely guided by the suggestions, past and future, of the Clergy themselves. To provide Textbooks for Dogmatic Treatises is not contemplated—at any rate not at the outset. On the other hand, the pastoral work of the missionary priests will be kept constantly in view, and the series will also deal with those historical and liturgical aspects of Catholic belief and practice which are every day being brought more into prominence.

That the needs of English-speaking countries are, in these respects, exceptional, must be manifest to all. In point of treatment it seems desirable that the volumes should be popular rather than scholastic, but the Editors hope that by the selection of writers, fully competent in their special subjects, the information given may always be accurate and abreast of modern research.

The kind approval of this scheme by His Grace the Archbishop of Westminster, in whose Diocese these manuals are edited, has suggested that the series should be introduced to the public under the general title of THE WESTMINSTER LIBRARY. It is hoped, however, that contributors may also be found among the distinguished Clergy of Ireland and America, and that the Westminster Library will be representative of Catholic scholarship in all English-speaking countries.

PREFACE.

THIS book is presented to the reader as a useful manual, and not as an exhaustive treatise. The divine gift of the Holy Eucharist has naturally occupied the thought and inspired the pens of the greatest doctors of theological science in every age of Christianity. Very great writers have demonstrated its reality, developed its theology, explored its philosophy, related its history and defended it against the contradictions of false teaching. In our days there is an increasingly large public who require something between a treatise and a catechism. There are many, both among the clergy and the laity, who have not the time, nor perhaps the taste, for a professed discussion on questions of divinity, of Christian philosophy, and of Church history, but who are quite able to take in a reasoned exposition of the principal dogmas of their faith. Theology, as the science of human religion, is, in a certain sense, within the grasp of every educated man. Proof, definition, division and the setting forth of relations, may be presented on a modest scale, in octavos, as well as in scholastic form in folios. The more

the priest and the thinking layman can be induced to make himself acquainted with the intellectual sphere in which the truths of his religion live and glow in their order and their harmony, the more firm will be their mental grasp of their faith, and the less reason will there be to fear the hostile influence of non-religious thought. It is hoped that books of the kind here attempted, although primarily intended for the clergy, may help the laity to intelligent knowledge without impairing the docility that the Gospel enjoins on every Christian. The clergy, who have really studied the subject here treated, and who are in a position to judge of what is said in these pages, will, perhaps, be pleased and refreshed to see their youthful studies reproduced without any bewildering apparatus of authorities or too rigid an insistence on scholastic form.

There are many aspects of the Holy Eucharist in which it may be said to have assumed a greater importance in mental and spiritual science at the present day than ever it has had before. There is, first of all, its relation to the philosophy of material things, and, indirectly, to the modern theories of knowledge. No one who has even a slight acquaintance with the modern views of objective and subjective cognition can help feeling that a philosophical system of mind and of the universe is perfectly impossible without a certain obedience to authority. The prevailing persuasion, indeed, is that a valid system of philosophy is, any how, impossible; for no philosopher will accept authority, and, on the other hand,

merely to interrogate one's own mental phenomena is, at the best, to shut one's self up in one's own atmosphere without any lawful way into the world outside, or any bridge that will bear one's weight, to give one a passage from mind to matter. All the time, it is evident that the mass of mankind behave and act as if there really were two spheres, that of mind, and that of external things, and that men are so constituted that they are confident they make no mistake, speaking generally, when they hold that these two spheres can mutually affect one another. As this persuasion on the part of the human race is sure to hold fast as long as there are any human beings left, it seems a pity that this common philosophy could not be accepted and made the base of a system. The great word-spinners of Oxford and elsewhere will cry out on the crudeness and unscientific nature of a suggestion like this. But if we take man as we find him, and refuse to argue against his solid instincts—and it seems futile to act in any other way—it is certain that we can never be proved to be in the wrong; and also that any scientific edifice we build up on that foundation will harmonise with that wide, deep and powerful flow of human impulse which is either genuine reality or else there is no reality at all. It is this human, plain, and consistent philosophy that the great doctors of Catholicism have clung to, used, and developed. Chief among them is St. Thomas of Aquin. It is this philosophy, and notably as expounded by St. Thomas, that the Catholic Church has employed as a setting for her doctrine of the Holy

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Eucharist. As that doctrine, which is a vital doctrine of the faith, concerns not merely abstract truth or practical morals but a certain fact or facts in the sphere of material substance, it is not difficult to see that the common human view of material substance must be, to a great extent, bound up with the Church's faith. This does not mean that the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist contradicts scientific research. But the Church will sometimes, no doubt, be unable to accept the inferences of scientific investigators, just as it rejects the *à priori* pronouncements of the speculative analysts of mental process. The Christian philosophy, as represented by St. Thomas, is by no means infallible or unshaken in the lines of reasoning or the deductions which, in its long history, its expounders have pursued and fought for. Catholics have a wide freedom, even after they have accepted the fundamental philosophy which seems to be required by the Holy Eucharist. But, to a Catholic who enters into the philosophical war of this age, it is a subject of intense interest to perceive how, in the Holy Eucharist, he has firm ground to stand upon, and to consider whether, in the Eucharistic dogma of the Real Presence and of Transubstantiation, he can find any sort of a lever to move the dead weight of sceptical speculation from which the most brilliant mental work of the age is so plainly suffering.

There is another direction in which the Holy Eucharist is of greater importance to Catholics at this moment than ever it has been in other times; and that is in the spiritual life and growth of the

soul. This spiritual life, as we know, depends upon a supernatural indwelling of Christ in the soul and on His supernatural stirrings and quickenings. Although this "life of grace," as it is properly called, is of grace, and not of nature, still it has always been recognised that for the higher work of grace Almighty God generally chooses a nature that is more refined, more conscious, more spiritual in its own elements. At the present day, the nature of men and women, in the several grades of their educational opportunities, is indefinitely more inward, more reflecting and more refined than at any former time. This refinement may not be, and it very often is not, in any way akin to the spirit of Jesus Christ. It is often merely natural self-consciousness, vanity and egoistic enjoyment. But a soil is not a bad soil because it is ready to foster evil seeds. Men's natures, in these times, may not only be expected to be more averse to what is violent and crude, and to the merely material and corporeal side of life, but they are better fitted to do justice to that very high, holy and spiritual ideal which is indicated by the love, the humility, the self-denial and the self-sacrifice of the Gospel. The Gospel, it is true, is not merely for a more or less refined generation; it is for the rudest and the roughest as well. But, when it finds a refined nature the Gospel spirit flourishes more luxuriantly, and this is proportionately true of a refined generation.

The Holy Eucharist is the great divinely appointed means of transforming the human soul into the likeness of Christ. At the present time,

then, more than ever, it must be the soul's grand resource. Now, more than ever, can it find human souls fitted and ready for its operation. Now, more than ever, do multitudes of hearts which have attained a certain refinement, aspire to that "life of the spirit" which may be foolish and worldly in its ideals and fatal in its realisation. Now, therefore, must there be a better appreciation of the Holy Eucharist, a greater solicitude on the part of pastors to bring it to bear on human need, and better opportunities for the masses of the faithful to appreciate it and to make use of it. There has been much sin in every Christian age. But the sin of the present age, whilst displaying all the gross features of ruder times, may be expected to show itself in far more fatal and incurable spiritual forms; whilst far greater numbers of people have learnt to think and to deliberate and are thus far more capable of that reflection which is of the essence of sin. The Holy Eucharist, therefore, is needed in these days. If we know how to use it, there is a great triumph prepared for it. If it is kept back, the world will give itself up more and more to intellectual and spiritual evil.

Moreover, it would appear that the Holy Eucharist is specially needed not only for the spiritual life, but also for that external and visible dispensation which is a condition of the spiritual well-being of Christ's servants, and what is called the Kingdom of God. In many periods of Church history, vast multitudes have been kept more or less under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and guided to a happy death, by their firm and settled Christian

surroundings. Pastors had place, prestige and power, the Church was visible and imposing and princes and the civil law co-operated. The millions of more simple souls went with the current. They may not have thought things out for themselves. But they knew the Gospel, and, somewhat unreflectingly perhaps, walked in the path of the Gospel, not by any means without high, touching and refined ideas. Ever since the sixteenth century the tendency in Europe has been to unfix and to get rid of that stable condition of Christian institutions which is so useful for the Christian masses. This process has gone on with accelerated pace during the last hundred years. We have, it may be said, now no Christian State. The pastors have lost their outward place and prerogative. The civil law makes it more and more difficult to keep up any Christian organisation whatever. Soon, perhaps, the old Christian Churches themselves may be turned to secular uses. It is hard to see how Catholicism, or indeed Christianity, can hold together in any visible shape without two things, which we still have—the Sovereign Pontiff and the Holy Eucharist. The Pope, indeed, will never fail us. Stripped and imprisoned as he is, and may be, the modern means of communication will always keep the Church within his voice and call. But the visible diffused symbol of the Catholic Kingdom will always be the Eucharistic altar—used now more than ever. The Holy Eucharist, as a great rite and dispensation, must supply more and more the outward and visible framework of the Kingdom

of God on earth. When Kings have ceased to follow Corpus Christi processions, when magistrates and knights no longer attend high Mass, when Bishops are no longer escorted to their Cathedrals by the chivalry of a diocese, the sheer frequentation of Mass and Communion by the Catholic millions must show forth Christ's earthly Kingdom, embody Catholic faith, and keep before the eyes of Catholics that holy law of the Gospel which the insolent pre-occupation of the world is so apt to make them ashamed of. The Holy Eucharist and its public exercise must now be to Catholics all that the most sacred cause and the most loyal cry can be to a devoted army. Numbers, enthusiasm and intelligence must make up for pomp and patronage—and even, if it comes to that, for glorious churches and gilded sanctuaries. The moral impressiveness of a wide and uncompromising devotion to the Body of Christ in the Sacrament of His love will not only exert a powerful influence on the world, but will steady the whole Catholic host in its march and bring in recruits from every side.

Priests have the greatest part to play in this Eucharistic movement for which the time seems ripe. As a humble manual of doctrine, which may turn their thoughts both to deeper mysteries and to higher aspirations, this book is offered primarily but not exclusively to them.

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CHAPTER I.

THE INSTITUTION.

WE will begin with the facts of the institution of the Holy Eucharist. There is still sufficient Christianity in the country to make it worth our best pains to ascertain exactly what our Blessed Lord said and intended in regard to this as to other matters.

It happens—or rather, it is a dispensation of Divine Providence—that the history of the institution of the Holy Eucharist is so full and so explicit that no man who believes in Christ can possibly reject the Eucharistic institution altogether. Men may try to reduce its meaning to very little, or to explain it away, but they cannot deny it is there. And what is more, our Lord's words are so plain, so literal and so reiterated, that any views founded upon them, except our own Catholic view, can only be supported by uphill labour and unconvincing argument.

There are chiefly two sets of passages in the New Testament which bear upon the institution of the Holy Eucharist.

We have, first, the anticipatory promise, as related in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, and, secondly, the history of the actual institution, which occurs, in almost identical words, in St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and the first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. We begin with the former.

It was in the second year of the sacred ministry, about twelve months before the Passion, that Jesus fed 5,000 people with five barley loaves and two small fishes on the slopes of a mountain to the north-east of the Lake of Galilee. It will be remembered that He crossed over the Lake of Galilee with His disciples, from Capharnaum, the town of His home, to the mountains on the opposite shore. There He found a great multitude gathering to hear Him. The circumstances of the miracle are familiar, and need not be here described. That same night the disciples set out to return in their boat to Capharnaum. A storm on the lake kept them rowing the whole night, until Jesus joined Himself to them, and then on a sudden they touched the shore. When the day came, and the storm had ceased, numbers of those who had witnessed the miracle of the feeding of the multitude came over to Capharnaum, seeking Jesus; and it is to them, and to the Scribes, Pharisees, and notables of Capharnaum, that He addresses Himself in the memorable passages which follow.

I begin with the twenty-seventh verse of the sixth chapter of St. John. The people crowd round our Blessed Lord, and He, with a clear reference to the recent miracle, exhorts them to "labour, not for the food that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting". Observe, at the very beginning, the two words "food" and "life everlasting," placed in relation to each other. The Jews fasten on the word "labour," and ask what they must do. Our Lord replies that they must believe in Himself. They, still thinking of the miracle, reply that Moses did an equally wonderful thing in giving the heavenly manna; therefore Moses was not to be set aside unless some further sign were shown. Jesus replies that, did they but know it, there was offered to them, at that moment, a Bread which was in very truth Bread from heaven, giving life to the world. Like the woman at the well, when our

Lord spoke to her of the water of life, the multitude begs our Lord to give them the means of obtaining that Bread. Then He says, "I am the Bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst".¹ The crowd thereupon murmured loudly, This is Jesus the son of Joseph; we know His father and His mother; how can He say that He has come down from heaven? Our Saviour went on to insist, "You need not murmur one to another; the Father of heaven hath sent Me; Him no man can see. He that believeth in Me hath life everlasting."

Up to this point² our Lord has been speaking of belief in Himself—of acceptance of Him as the Bread sent down from heaven. To partake of that Bread was to believe; to believe was to take the essential step towards securing life everlasting.

But now He begins a new and startling announcement. First He repeats what He has already said, "I am the Bread of life". This summary repetition is a very striking point, because thus repeated it is no longer, if I may so call it, a substantive statement, but assumes the character of an introduction to a new exposition. He says again, then, "I am the Bread of life. Your fathers did eat the manna in the desert, and died; this is the Bread that cometh down from heaven, in order that if any one eat thereof he may not die. I am the living Bread, that am come down from heaven. If any one eat of this Bread he shall live for ever." All this is verbally a repetition. But it assumes a new and striking significance when He goes on without break to say something entirely fresh: "And the Bread which I will give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world".³ He stops there, for the moment. But we are informed in the most emphatic manner that this new point was instantly

¹ Verse 35.² Verse 47.³ Verse 51.

taken up by the hearers. For the very next words of the text are, "Then (or thereupon), the Jews strove among themselves saying, How can this man give us flesh to eat?" Now comes the opportunity for our Lord, either to correct a misunderstanding, if there is one, or to insist, to amplify, to emphasise. This is what He actually says: "Amen, Amen, I say unto you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you have not life in you". Note the amplifying phrase "drink His blood". Then, without pause, He repeats—for it is a repetition, except that the word for "eat" is altered—and says: "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath life everlasting; and I will raise him up at the last day". He then emphasises the point that He means real food and drink: "My flesh is food really, and My blood is drink really". Then, using for the fourth time in four consecutive sentences the double phrase, "to eat My flesh and drink My blood," He expresses His loving purpose and view in this great dispensation, by saying that he who does this "abides in Me and I in him"; it is to be a pledge and sacrament of intimate union. Then He invokes all His power and divinity, as one who would have all who hear Him understand well how great a thing is in question, using the terribly novel phrase a fifth time: "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me he, even he, shall live by Me". Finally, He again refers to the manna, and says, "*This* is the Bread that came down from heaven". As if He said, What think you now of the manna of the desert? They who eat that manna, as I told you, died; he that eateth this Bread shall live for ever.¹

It seems as if He broke off here; for the sacred text says: "These things He said in the synagogue, teaching in Capharnaum". But there is a most instructive

¹ Verse 58.

sequel. Either then, or later, our Lord knew that many were much disturbed, and called this a "hard doctrine". But He does not explain it away. If the words He had recently used referred, like those in the earlier part of the chapter, to faith only; or if they signified no more than that there was to be a symbolical eating of bread and wine, it is almost inconceivable that He should have said nothing to liberate His disciples from a mistake to which His own expressions had undoubtedly given occasion. But He only expresses His compassion for the blindness or perverseness of those who will not accept His Word. "Are you scandalized?" He says. Is this teaching a block of stumbling to you? But let me tell you that those who would understand *Me*, need other lights than those of mere human intelligence. What would you say if you saw *Me*, who stand before you as a man, ascending up to whence I came? "It is the spirit that saveth; the flesh profiteth nothing." That is, spiritual insight alone will here avail; merely natural or human judgment profiteth nothing. The passage recalls that similar phrase which our Lord addressed to St. Peter—"Flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee but My Father".¹ And that other, spoken to the Jews on another occasion: "You judge according to the flesh".² All these passages express the same thing—that the real character of our Blessed Lord and of His teachings, are, as St. Paul insists so eloquently in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, beyond the discovery or the criticism of human nature's native faculties. Hence, this passage has no reference to any distinction between the literal and the figurative, as if our Lord wished to say, I am only speaking of symbolical flesh and blood. After the ἀληθῶς of verse 55, He would have certainly contradicted Himself, had He said this. He goes on: "The words which I speak to you are spirit and life";

¹ Matt. xvi. 17.

² John viii. 15.

that is, This statement and announcement which I have made is in the spiritual order—the order which alone will save men—for the ideas of mere human nature will never save them. “But,” He continues sadly, “there are some among you who do not believe. . . .” who cannot or will not rise above mere natural judgment; “that is why I said to you that no one can come to Me unless it is given unto him by My Father”.¹

The almost universal opinion of the Fathers, the doctors, the scholastics and the theologians, is that this chapter of St. John, at least from verse 48, is a promise and description of the Holy Eucharist. If it is, as there can hardly be a doubt, I would ask you to observe how very strongly it makes for the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence. First, the sacramental eating of His Body and drinking His Blood is placed as a sort of sequel or development of the Incarnation. It is as if He said, I am the true Bread from heaven; partake of Me, by believing in Me, and you shall have life everlasting. But I say more than this; I say, that I am going to make Myself truly and literally food and drink, for your spiritual life; and I wish you to summon all your faith in God and your trust in Me, so that you may be able to accept this new and amazing dispensation. Secondly, it is acknowledged that the only figurative meaning of the phrase “to eat the flesh and drink the blood” of a person, as far as the Jews were concerned, would have been the deepest injury and spite that one man could bear to another.² Thirdly, we must note how our Lord masses together the six assertions of which we have spoken,³ each repeating and strengthening the others, and all reiterating the strange and novel phrase “eating My Body,” and not merely the one with which He started, “eating bread from

¹ Verse 65.

² Compare, for example, Psalm xxvi. 2, “Whilst the wicked draw near against me, to eat my flesh”.

³ Verses 51-58.

heaven".¹ Fourthly, as we have already pointed out, when the hearers understood Him of a literal partaking of His Body, He made no correction or explanation, when it would have been easy, natural, and imperative for Him to do so, had they misunderstood Him. Lastly, He appeals to the spiritual apprehension as against the fleshly apprehension. This was an appeal which both He and His Apostles were accustomed to make when a deep or novel Christian doctrine was set before the world. It would have been utterly out of place had He merely been intending to institute a harmless and obvious symbolical ceremony, not by any means so important as many ceremonies of that ancient Law which He was superseding and abolishing.

We justly conclude, therefore, from the words of the sixth chapter of St John, here considered, that our Lord, about a year before the Last Supper, promised that He would give the world a dispensation or institution of which it would be literally true to say that men really and truly therein received as food His sacred Body and Blood, as a means of grace and a pledge of life everlasting.

We now pass on to the words of Institution themselves.

Let us first set down, in words that follow as literally as possible the Greek text, the four passages in which we find the Institution related in the New Testament.

ST. MATTHEW xxvi. 26.—“When they were at meat” (or “eating”) “Jesus taking bread and having uttered blessing” (or “having blessed” it) “broke, and giving it to the disciples, said, Take, eat; this is My Body. And taking the Cup” (or “a Cup”) “and having given thanks, He gave (it) to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is My Blood of the New Testament, that (Blood) which is shed for many unto the remission of sins.”

ST. MARK xiv. 22.—“And when they were eating,

¹ Verse 50.

taking Bread, having uttered blessing He broke and gave to them, and said, Take, this is My Body. And taking the Cup, having given thanks, He gave to them; and all drank of it. And He said to them, This is My Blood of the Testament (that) shed for many."

ST. LUKE xxii. 19.—"And taking bread, having given thanks, He broke and gave to them saying, This is My Body, that (Body) given for you. This do ye unto My remembrance. And in like manner the Cup, after the supping, saying, This Cup (is) the New Testament in My Blood, that (Cup, or Blood) shed for you."

ST. PAUL, 1 Cor. xi. 23.—"For I received of the Lord, what I also have delivered to you, that the Lord on the night on which He was betrayed took bread, and having given thanks, broke, and said, This is My Body, that for you; this do in remembrance of Me. In like manner also the Cup, after the supping, saying, This Cup is the New Testament in My Blood; this do, as often as you shall drink, unto My remembrance."

The Vulgate and the Textus Receptus insert in St. Paul's text "Take ye and eat" before "This is My Body". But the best Greek manuscripts and the interesting Codex Amiatinus [old Latin Vulgate] omit these words, which seem to have been inserted from St. Matthew. The Vulgate also has "which shall be delivered for you" (*quod pro vobis tradetur*) instead of simply "that (Body) for you". There seems no authority in any Greek manuscript for the future tense, although some of the manuscripts add "delivered" (present participle), or "broken".

It will be observed that, of these four passages, that from St. Matthew agrees almost word for word with that of St. Mark, whilst St. Luke's words are practically the same as those of St. Paul. We have thus virtually two forms of the history of the Institution. Did St. Matthew omit any of our Lord's words, or did St. Paul attribute to Him words that He never uttered? The answer is, that we are not obliged to believe that any

one of the accounts gives the exact words of our Lord, without change or omission, or even explicative addition. As Father Knabenbauer says: "We gather from these passages that the Apostles were most solicitous to give with accuracy the sense of the words of Christ, but not so His words themselves; and this is frequently observable in other utterances also of our Lord which are related by more than one."¹ Let us observe how exactly the accounts agree in meaning. First, we have in all the chief and sacramental formulas "This is My Body," said whilst He held the bread, "This is My Blood," whilst He held the cup. Secondly, they all call the Cup the "Blood of the Testament" or the "New Testament". Of the significance of this a word will be said presently. Thirdly, whilst in St. Matthew we have "Take and eat," "Drink ye all of this," we have in St. Paul that He "gave" the Bread and the Cup—certainly for no other purpose than to be partaken of. Fourthly, both in St. Matthew and in St. Luke, the sacred Blood is said to be "shed for many" or, equivalently, "shed for you". Then, if we look at the apparent differences, we find them of great significance. St. Matthew and St. Mark say "as they were at meat," or "whilst they were supping"; St. Paul and St. Luke use the phrase "after the supper"; the significant fact being, as it is easy to gather, that the Institution took place whilst they were still sitting at table, before the formal or ceremonial conclusion of the Supper and yet after the legal formalities were really finished. We have here the solution of the apparent difficulty arising from certain words of St. Luke. Some controversialist, citing the words "I will not again drink of this fruit of the vine until I drink it new in the Kingdom of Heaven"² have found therein an argument against the Real Presence. But in the ritual of the Paschal Supper, the Cup was handled and partaken of at least

¹ In *Ev. S. Lucæ, ad loc.*

² Luke xxii. 18.

three or four times.¹ It was evidently to one of these occasions that the words in question are to be referred. True, those words are, in St. Mark's account, placed immediately after the words of Institution. But even if our Lord, in using them, held the Eucharistic chalice in His hands, there is no reason for making any difficulty. That chalice was still, to outward appearance, the fruit of the grape; it was originally wine; and the significance of this phrase depends upon the Paschal Supper and Eucharistic Institution considered as a single rite in which "wine" was used; our Lord giving His Apostles to understand that this was the last time He would partake like that, or join in that rite, until the sacrifice of the Cross was consummated, when there would be what He calls "new wine"; a new dispensation and a new ritual, conveying the grace of the Blood of Christ. But it is far more probable that our Lord spoke the words before the Institution, as stated in St. Luke, verses 16, 17, 18—the bread of the Eucharist being taken into His hands in verse 19. The declaration that this was the last Paschal Supper is fittingly followed by the establishment of that rite which is to take its place; the Eucharistic proclamation being intended to be a sequel to the former declaration and the fulfilment of the ancient Passover.

Before further commenting on the words of institution, I will call your attention to the way in which they are reproduced in the form of Consecration, in the Mass.

After reciting that our Blessed Lord, the day before His Passion, took Bread into His holy and venerable hands, the form states that He "raised His eyes to heaven, to God, the Father Almighty, and giving thanks blessed and brake." The circumstance of the raising of the eyes to heaven is not mentioned in the New Testament. But this Roman traditional form, as

¹ See Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus*, vol. ii., also Vigouroux, *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, art. "Cène," p. 510.

we cannot doubt, is as old as any part of the New Testament, and the raising of the eyes to heaven, or to God, is mentioned in nearly all the ancient liturgies. That our Blessed Lord actually used this significant gesture we may justly infer from other passages of the New Testament. For example, in the miracles of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, as related in Matthew xiv. 19, and John xi. 21, He is said to have raised His eyes to heaven and given thanks. Neither are the words "He blessed (it)" found in the Scriptural account, but it is undoubtedly implied in *εὐλογήσας* (St. Matt. and St. Mark). With what gesture He blessed the elements is not recorded; it was probably with the uplifted hand, for we cannot suppose that He signed upon them that Cross which had not yet been elevated to the happy dignity of being the source of all blessing to the world. The form continues, "And gave to His disciples, saying, Take ye all and eat; for this is My Body". It here agrees with St. Matthew and St. Mark, and omits the words "delivered for you," of St. Luke, and "broken for you" of St. Paul.

In the consecration of the Chalice, we have a more elaborate formula. "In a like manner, after supper was done, taking also into His holy and venerable hands this most excellent Cup, also giving thanks unto Thee, He blessed and gave to His disciples, saying: Take ye and drink ye of it, all; for this is the Cup of My Blood, of the new and eternal Testament; the Mystery of Faith; which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins. These things as often as you shall do, you shall do unto My remembrance."

Here we have, first, one or two variations from the text of the Scripture. We have "The Chalice of My Blood," which differs from the text of St. Matthew and St. Mark, "This is My Blood," and agrees with St. Luke and St. Paul. Then we find the word "eternal" inserted. This is not found in any of the Evangelists. It empha-

sises our Lord's statement, that that Blood is the Blood of a Sacrifice which marks the New Law, and the New Law is to abolish the Old Law with its sacrifices, and is itself never to be superseded, but to last for all time, and to be fulfilled in eternity.

Then we have a very remarkable insertion—"The Mystery of Faith". What is the origin, and the meaning, of these words, which intervene between two Scriptural clauses? There can be little doubt that these words, like some others we have noted, represent words that our Blessed Lord actually used. The Evangelists have not transcribed them in relating the history of the Institution. But they have been preserved by tradition. The phrase "Mystery of Faith" was certainly a formula of the early Church, and we may presume a phrase of our Lord's own. Those words of St. Paul addressed to the Deacons that they should "have the Mystery of Faith in a pure conscience";¹ that similar phrase "the Mystery hidden and prepared before all ages," occurring twice,² and the "Mystery of Jesus Christ which has not been discovered to the children of men in former ages,"³ make it quite plain that the "Mystery of Faith," or the "Mystery of Christ," was the saving of the world by the Blood of Christ. The precious Blood, poured out for men, is the Mystery of Faith. We are not bound to believe, certainly, that our Lord did use these words; we may be satisfied with thinking that they are there by the authority of the Church. But as we find them, almost without exception, in all the ancient liturgies, it seems impossible that any single Church, even the Roman Church, should of its own initiative, have invented them; and as they form part of a formula in which our Lord's own words are professedly given, it would seem a kind of irreverence to have put them into His mouth if they were not

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 9.

² 1 Cor. ii. 7 and Col. i. 26.

³ Eph. iii. 4, 5.

His. It is certain that neither the Evangelists nor St. Paul have related all the words used by our Lord.

I have laid before you all, or nearly all, that is found in the text of the New Testament relating to the Institution of the Holy Eucharist and the significance of that Institution. We shall go on to inquire more in detail what is the meaning of the words, "This is My Body," "This is My Blood". But now I would ask you to rise above all mere controversy, and to take a broad and comprehensive view of that great act of our Blessed Saviour. You behold Him at the point where two epochs meet. That night the ancient Law was to cease. That night, the long period of preparation, of hope, of prophecy, of instruction, which had lasted from the Egyptian exodus to that hour, was to end. The old rites, the sacrifices, the Temple worship, was to be finished with ; the old ordinances, which as St. Paul says, carried with them, as ordinances, no grace, but only penalties for disobedience, were to die out, to fade as the stars when the sun is coming. The great sacrifice was, once for all, to be accomplished. To-morrow, the Lamb that was foretold from the beginning of time and from eternity, was to offer that to the Eternal Father which would for ever make all other offerings superfluous. But at that last moment of intercourse with His chosen ones, our Lord was most certainly thinking of something else than His own Passion. The awful sacrifice of that Friday was to last long, but it was to be over in a few hours. Jesus is looking forward into the vast and dark future ; the future with its generations and its millions of souls, not one of whom was to witness what was to pass on Calvary ; not one of whom was ever to look upon their Saviour in the flesh. What were these to have ? How were these to carry on their worship ? How were they to make sure of the grace that was to save them ? Was the Incarnation to be nothing but a history ? Was the Cross to be only a memory ? Conceivably,

it might have been so. The very record of that life and passion would have left the human race for ever richer; and the abundant grace purchased by the Blood of Christ would have been there for every human soul, had there been neither a Church nor a visible dispensation. But practically the salvation of the future millions required, besides an indefectible teaching Church, a dispensation of perpetual outward and public worship, and the continued renewal, tangible and impressive, of the out-pouring of Calvary. Only thus could men in great numbers be saved. It was, therefore, with the coming centuries in His view that He said: "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you"; because it was to be the occasion of the establishment of the New Covenant, with a worship, and rites, and ordinances, fitted to keep men up to the level of such a stupendous divine interference as the Incarnation and the Passion. It was with the profoundest knowledge of men's frame that He said they should receive His grace and His life by eating His flesh. He foresaw the daily Mass, the innumerable Communion, and the never-failing, universal, always growing, Christian *cultus* of the Blessed Sacrament. And it was with that intention and desire that He said to His Apostles, and through them to the long generations of the Catholic priesthood, united to the faithful laity, Do ye this in memory of Me! For the Eucharistic gift is the perpetual memorial of Jesus Christ the Saviour; but a memorial which is the most powerful of all memorials, for in It men have His own flesh and blood, soul and divinity, to rouse them, to touch them, to win them, to heal them, day by day, so that every man may have life everlasting within the most easy reach. The stupendous miracle of the Real Presence is not too great a miracle to effect such a purpose as this.

CHAPTER II.

THE REAL PRESENCE.

THE Holy Eucharist, among Catholics, and even by some non-Catholics, is justly called a Mystery. It is truly a Mystery. But even a Mystery is not wholly and entirely mysterious. There can be no reason why a reverent and reasonable mind should not study and discuss these aspects of a Mystery which can be treated by human reason, guided by Faith, on premisses supplied by revelation and reason respectively. Such rational consideration of a Mystery becomes absolutely necessary when it is the object of the attacks of hostile science.

The chief, though not the only, Mystery of the Holy Eucharist lies in the Real Presence. The discussion on the Real Presence, as I need not say, has been, and continues to be, active and warm, within the Church and without, and the literature of that discussion has grown to enormous dimensions.

It is partly theological, partly philosophical, and partly polemical. All educated Catholics, and not only professors or priests, may rightly be anxious to be well informed on each of these aspects of the Eucharistic question. As regards theology, whilst there are, in the Catholic manuals, many details of theological speculation which the mass of Catholics have no opportunity or need to enter into, there is at the same time a wide field of Catholic dogmatic teaching which they can well appreciate, and with which it is worth their while to become

more or less scientifically acquainted. The philosophical aspects of the Holy Eucharist are even more within the range of lay discussion, for it is on this side that the keenest of our non-Catholic intellects approach, and in most cases attack, this Mystery. Eucharistic controversy, as far as it is distinct from theology or philosophy, is concerned with the relations of the Eucharistic dispensation to the text of Scripture, to early Church history, and to Christian history in general. No one should be altogether unprepared to give an account of the faith that is in him.

There is no difficulty in stating the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence. The doctrines of the Christian revelation are intended for the edification and spiritual and mental advantage of the Christian multitudes; for the illumination of the minds and the nourishment of the hearts of the masses for whom Christ died. Therefore they must be capable of easy statement. It must be easy to ascertain what they import; easy to obtain a certain intelligent grasp of their meaning; and easy to find, in every generation, words fitted to convey the right idea of them to the minds even of the young, the uneducated and the ignorant. "All thy children," said the Prophet, "shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children".¹ Our Blessed Lord refers to this passage just before making His promise of the Eucharist.²

For a statement of the doctrine of the Eucharist, I cannot do better than take you straight to the Council of Trent. That great Council tells us, in very striking words, that the principal object of its assembling was to root out the errors then so widely prevailing on the subject of this venerable and divine Sacrament.³ It begins its decree on the Holy Eucharist thus: "This holy Synod teaches, and openly and simply professes,

¹ Isaias liv. 13.

² John vi. 45.

³ Sess. xiii.

that in the august Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, after the consecration of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, is truly, really and substantially contained under the species (or appearances) of these sensible things".¹

The words "openly and simply professes," are worth notice. They indicate that the Catholic Church has nothing to conceal; and that there is nothing in this great dogma which she is not ready to state to the whole world. Adversaries may discuss, refine, object; but the doctrine itself is very plain. The Council, for the moment, leaves all controversy out of sight, and takes its stand upon our Lord's own formula, which it reiterates and slightly expands in order to bring out its plain meaning. Our Lord says, "This is My Body". "This" is the Object which He holds in His hands, and which has the appearance of Bread. The Council says, accordingly, that our Lord Jesus Christ *is* there, under those appearances—truly, really, and substantially there. The word truly (*vere*) here reinforces the word "is"; as when, in answer to an inquiry, Is it so? one replies "Truly it is so".

The word "really" (*realiter*) is in opposition to a merely figurative presence. A distinction of *res* (thing) from *figura* (figure, symbol, or presentment) is common and well known. Thus when it is stated that our Lord's Body and Blood are present "really," the meaning is that they are there not merely symbolically or virtually, or representatively (as in a portrait, for example), or figuratively, or *improprie* (improperly), or after a manner of speaking. When it is said that "the rock was Christ," this is a symbol. When our Lord says "I am the Door," this again is a symbolical or figurative expression. The Fish, in the catacombs, is justly said to be our Lord, inasmuch as it represents Him, like a symbol or anagram would. The priest is sometimes

¹ Sess. xiii., Cap. I.

called "Christ"; but the sense evidently is, that He is Christ virtually, in a given sphere. If we say that Christ abides in the soul of the just man, the meaning is that He is there by power and loving complacency. In none of these instances could we say, without qualification, that He was there *realiter*.

"Substantially" is distinguished against "modally"; the word "substance" being here taken in the sense in which the term is used in the scholastic philosophy—*viz.*, as a distinct, self-complete, existing nature, in which various modes, "accidents" or qualities, inhere, and which at the same time is distinct from such modes. Each thing is conceived as a nature which is distinct and distinguishable from all other natures, which has a certain completeness—as one tree is not another tree but a finished whole—and which is at once the substratum or subject of its own colour, size, taste, etc., and yet not identical with any of these or with the *ensemble* of them. Thus "substantially" here excludes all that "really" excludes, and states in addition that our Lord's Body and His Blood are present as things or natures in the full and complete sense. The term has quite a different meaning in modern popular speech. When we meet the expression "substantially present," or "substantially complete," or "substantially achieved," we generally take it to mean not quite or wholly present, complete, etc., but so far so that very little remains to be concerned about. And from this meaning or use is derived the further use of "substantial" for "considerable" or "important," as when we speak of a substantial gain or a substantial instalment. The employment of the word "substance," with its derivatives, in Catholic philosophy will have to be more fully insisted upon farther on. It is the very key to the philosophy of the Real Presence.

Meanwhile, it is very useful to us, whether as against gainsayers, or for our own profit, to take our stand upon the plain statement set down by the greatest ecclesi-

astical authority. The words of the Council of Trent are clear enough, both in themselves and to the ordinary human mind, to give the intelligence of the faithful believer a true and sufficient hold or grasp of the doctrine. All Catholics have a right to decline to be drawn into elaborating this doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, or similar doctrines. We speak plain words; to these plain words we adhere; and if you press us and say, Do you mean this, or do you mean that? to these plain words we come back. The Catholic who is not a theologian, or an expert thinker, may not always be able, at a first or even second glance, to say whether the terms and the phrases proposed to him by non-Catholics are admissible or not; whether the statements offered to him by non-Catholic friends, or found in their books, are reconcilable with the Church's doctrine or not. But he can always adhere to his own "sound form" of words, and to the obvious meaning of those words.

Carefully bearing in mind this plain, intelligible, and authoritative statement of the doctrine of the Real Presence, and remembering that this statement is meant for use in our own times, let us now turn to the earliest Christian records and see how it accords with what we find written in the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church. By an examination of these sources it will be clear that no other statement—that is, no contradictory statement, and no less ample a statement—can be reconciled with the earliest Christian teaching.

It will not be necessary to repeat what has been said when commenting upon the words of the Promise in the sixth chapter of St. John. The terms which our Lord there employs could hardly have been more aptly chosen had He intended to forestall the Tridentine definition. We have in the ἀληθῶς the assertion of a "true" and indubitable Presence. The force of "really" is plainly involved in the comparison used by

our Lord, "As the Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, he that eateth Me he also shall live by Me".¹ As if He said, The eating of Me and the grace given by Me are as "really" connected as My proceeding from the Father is "really" connected with My living by the Father; the latter is a real and not a figurative statement; its terms and their connection are all real; and in the same way in the former statement, the eating of Christ is "real," the grace is "real" and the connection between the two is "real". The force of "substantially," as expressing a complete, objective, self-contained nature, is involved in our Lord's saying—a saying that would otherwise be very crude, and even painful—that the faithful are to "eat Him," and to "eat His Body," to "drink His Blood". This excludes mere instructive symbolism, mere fancy, however beautiful. It involves the providing of an objective thing, and its presentation to one who is to deal with it as one deals with food.

Coming to the words of institution, their polemic force as proving the Real Presence is, first of all, of a negative kind. If our Lord says, "This is My Body," "This is My Blood," the natural inference is that it is really so. Nay, further, it seems certain that, in such a momentous institution, and at such a crisis of His career, when He was closing His ministry and providing for the future of the immortal Church He was to found, He would insert all the qualifying words that were necessary. But there are simply no qualifications. Bread might certainly typify Him; but, had that been all He meant, would He not have said "I am Bread," and not "This is My Body"? Even if we go so far as to admit that He might on some occasion have said, holding up a loaf, "This is Myself," as He might—though it is a stretch to admit it—have pointed to a door or a vine, and said "That is Myself," the actual circum-

¹ John vi. 58.

stances forbid us to think He could have done so on this occasion. It would have been a very strong thing to say, of a door, "That is Myself"; but it is incredible that He could have gone on to say, "Set up that door in all your assemblies". It would have been carrying out a figure to grotesque lengths. He would only have used such language if the door had really been Himself. So, if we admit that "This is My Body" might, considered in some contexts, be the declaration of a figure, yet when He goes on to say, you must eat this Bread, and continue to do so to the end of time in your Churches, it is impossible to avoid the inference that a real "eating" means a real "presence".

Thus, to say the least, the words of institution, understood in their direct and most natural acceptation, signify a Real Presence; and it rests with those who deny the Real Presence to explain them away.

But there is also a strong argument of a positive kind. Let me again suppose, or grant, that the expression, This is My Body, This is My Blood, in certain contexts, or abstractedly, might be merely figurative—like, I am the Door. But suppose that our Lord had said, That door is Myself, and had immediately added, "Yes, My very self whom you now hear speaking," is it not clear that the hearer's attention would have been strangely arrested, and he would have said to himself, What singular emphasis! Surely He cannot mean that it *really is* Himself? That is to say, a verbal enforcement of the kind described would naturally be taken to indicate that what was said was no figure but literal reality. Now let us observe the words of institution. Our Lord says, This is My Body,—and whilst the hearer is beginning to take in His meaning, He goes on, "That Body which is given for you". He says, This is My Blood, and immediately adds, "That Blood which is poured out for you". The Greek shows the force of these declarative additions. Τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σῶμά μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον. Τοῦτό

ἐστι τὸ αἷμα μου, τὸ τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυνόμενον; Hoc quod do manducandum est ipsum corpus meum, ipsum quod pro vobis datur; id quod porrigo bibendum est ipse sanguis meus, ipse Novi Testamenti, ipse qui pro multis effunditur. "This is My Body; yes, the very Body given for you; This is My Blood; yes, the very Blood of the New Testament, the very Blood poured out for you and for many." It can hardly be denied that, according to the ordinary use of language, such emphatic additions have the force of an assertion of reality, of literalness, as opposed to mere appearance or symbol. The hearers knew how solemn were those words "given" as applied to the Body of Christ, and the "Blood of the Covenant poured out" for the world, as applied to the Cup. They knew well that their Master was thinking of the victims and the blood-shedding of the Mosaic Law, and of Himself as the Victim of the Law to come. Or if they did not, at that moment of awe and amazement, grasp all that He meant, the full force of it would make itself felt after they had been witnesses of what happened on Good Friday. It was impossible, therefore, for them not to feel then, and more strongly afterwards, that if He had intended them to believe in a literal Presence, He could not have used words more startling, more grave, more worthy of such a dispensation, or more strongly suggestive of a desire to be understood as He spoke.¹

¹ It is sometimes objected that the words of Institution cannot, in some details, be verified of the real Body of Christ, and that consequently the whole must be taken metaphorically. For example, we read in St. Paul's account: "This is My Body which is broken for you". Now, no one pretends that consecration imports any real change in the Body of Christ. Therefore, it can only be of the metaphorical Body that the word "broken" can be verified. But it is easy to see that the expression "broken" in this place is only a variant for "given". The expression "to break bread" means, in Holy Scripture, to give or distribute bread—as in *Isaias* (lviii. 7), "Break thy bread to the hungry". The Body of Christ being really present is said to be "broken" because it is there under the appearance of bread, which is given or distributed. Hence St. Luke. the

The passage in which St. Paul¹ relates the Eucharistic institution is introduced in order to regulate the administration of the Supper of the Lord, and to correct abuses which were springing up. It is observable that he calls the Eucharistic elements simply the "Body of the Lord". No doubt he calls them also "this Bread" and "this Cup of the Lord," but this is clearly a reference merely to their outward seeming; for the point of the passage is to impress upon the Corinthians that "this Bread" and this "Cup of the Lord" are much more than what they seem; so much more, that he who partakes unworthily is "liable to punishment" (*ἐνοχος*) on account of the Body of the Lord—that is, on account of profaning the Body of the Lord. The same idea is repeated in the two following verses.² A man is directed to "prove himself" before partaking of that Bread and that Cup; and the reason is immediately added, *viz.*, that "he who eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord"—that is, not distinguishing and recognising the Body of the Lord. St. Paul, therefore, calls the Holy Eucharist without qualification the "Body of the Lord"; and when he proclaims that an unworthy participation brings "judgment," that is, damnation, upon the recipient, he virtually says that that Body is truly, really and substantially there present.

We now proceed to examine the testimonies of the early Fathers. Let it be borne in mind that what we assert is that, in the New Testament, and in the earliest ecclesiastical writers, the Holy Eucharist is called, simply and without qualification, the Body and Blood of Christ;

disciple of St. Paul, has "which is given for you". That it means more than merely distributed to the twelve; that the words *ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν* give the phrase a sacrificial character, is what we shall maintain farther on. But the subordinate metaphor found in the use of "broken" for "given" in no way makes the main proposition metaphorical.

¹ 1 Cor. xi, 23 *sqq.*

² Verses 28, 29.

and this under circumstances which fully demonstrate that that sacred Body and Blood are considered to be truly, really and substantially present.

It will not be possible to cite one-tenth part of the texts of the Fathers, as we find them in Bellarmine,¹ or even in Franzelin.² But we may select six or seven, from the Fathers of East and West, during the first four Christian centuries. These will be enough to show our method or principles of demonstration; and as there are absolutely no contradictory passages, they will be enough to prove the *consensus ecclesiæ*.

We begin with St. Ignatius of Antioch. We know that St. Ignatius was a disciple of St. John the Evangelist, and that he was Bishop of Antioch—the see of St. Peter—for thirty-seven years. He was martyred in the amphitheatre of Rome, probably about A.D. 107.

The Epistles of St. Ignatius are largely concerned with the denunciation of a certain *Docetism*, which practically denied that Christ was really human. St. Ignatius speaks strongly of Christ's divinity and also of His humanity. In the following passage, therefore, he is not speaking directly or primarily of the Eucharist; and this circumstance makes his language very interesting and valuable. It is from his Epistle to the Smyrnæans:³ "They (the *Docetæ*) abstain from Eucharist (or thanksgiving) and prayer, because they allow not that the Eucharist is the flesh of Our Saviour Jesus Christ (that flesh) which suffered for our sins, which the Father by His benignity raised up. They therefore that gainsay the gift of God die in their disputings".⁴ Here the point on which stress is laid is that the Flesh of our Lord is real human flesh, and the argument is that a denial of this leads to a refusal of the Eucharist; the process in the Martyr's mind clearly

¹ *Controversiæ*, tom. iii.

² *De SS. Eucharistiâ*, Thesis viii.

³ Ch. vii.

⁴ I have adopted Dr. Armitage Robinson's translation, in the Article "Eucharist" in the *Encyc. Biblica*. Cf. Batiffol, *Études*, II., pp. 129 ff.

being that the Eucharist is really and substantially Christ. We cannot conceive that a Sacramentarian would argue like this. If the Holy Eucharist were natural Bread, and only symbolised the Body of the Lord, the Eucharist could never be adduced as a proof of the reality of Christ's Body.

Following the order of time, we will next take St. Justin, "philosopher and martyr," as the ancient Acts call him. He was a native of Palestine, but paid two visits to Rome, where he founded a school, disputed with the heathen, and published his famous *Apologies*. He was beheaded probably in 167. It is in this great man's First Apology that we find the earliest extant description of the Liturgy of the Mass. I do not quote the whole passage, but only what is to our present purpose. He says: "The food itself with us is called Eucharistia, of which none is permitted to partake except one who believes . . . and who has passed through the washing for remission of sins and new birth, and so lives as Christ commanded. For we receive these not as common bread or common drink, but as Jesus Christ our Saviour being incarnate by the Word of God possessed both flesh and blood for our salvation, so also we were taught that the food over which thanksgiving has been made by the utterance in prayer of the word derived from Him" (or rather "the food Eucharistised by the prayer of the word delivered by Him") "is the Flesh and Blood of that incarnate Jesus." And he then briefly transcribes the gospel narrative of the institution, bringing into full relief the words, This is My Body, This is My Blood. Here St. Justin says, plainly and simply, that the Bread of the Eucharist, when consecrated, is the very flesh which the Word of God took for our salvation.¹

St. Irenæus was an Asiatic, and a disciple of St. Polycarp. Passing to Southern Gaul, in the wake of

¹ *Apologia* I., 66.

so many Asiatic Greeks, he was ordained priest at Lyons, and after the martyrdom of St. Pothinus was appointed Bishop of that great See by Pope Eleutherius. The only complete work of St. Irenæus that has come down to us is that which is generally known as *Adversus hæreses*; its more correct name is "The detection and refutation of false Gnosis," or Gnosticism. He died A.D. 202. His argument against the Gnostics leads to a clear statement on the Real Presence.

It was a feature of the error of these rationalising heretics that Jesus was denied to be the Son of God, or the Word of God the Creator—the real "Creator" of things visible being in their view the spirit called the Demiurge. He therefore argues: "How shall they feel assured that that Bread over which thanksgiving has been made" (the phrase here is the very expression of St. Justin) "is the Body of their Lord, and the Chalice of His Blood, if they do not declare Him the Son of the world's Creator?"¹ His reasoning is that if the change of the Bread into the Body of the Lord depends, as it does, upon the power of Jesus, any theory which denies the power of Jesus over the material world will necessarily refuse to recognise this Eucharistic change; but that the Bread really does become the Body of the Lord is a tenet of Christian faith, professed even by the Gnostics themselves; therefore their refusal to admit that Jesus is the true Son of the Father and the Word of the world's Creator is against the Faith. It is not the argument against Gnosticism which here concerns us, but the undesigned proof of the belief in the Real Presence. This belief, here stated without qualification, is expressed in equally plain terms in several other passages of St. Irenæus.²

¹ Lib. iv., cap. 18, par. 4.

² See Franzelin, and the *Faith of Catholics* (p. 194). The reader may also be interested in the long and admirable passage in which the Blessed John Fisher vindicates the teaching of St. Irenæus and refutes Ecolapadius in his work *De veritate Eucharistiæ* (lib. iv., cap. 21).

The great African presbyter Tertullian, who lived till the fortieth year of the third century, unfortunately fell into the errors of the Montanists; but his testimony as to the Real Presence is unequivocal. We will only cite two short passages. In his tract *De Idololatriâ* he inveighs against the impiety of certain Christians who persist in the unlawful business of the fabrication of idols, and yet presume to approach the Holy Communion. All who have any zeal for the faith, he says, must mourn that a Christian "should approach those hands to the Body of the Lord which bestow bodies on demons".¹ And in the writing which is entitled *De Pudicitia*, a production of his Montanist period, he speaks thus of the Prodigal Son: "He then also first receives the ring, by which when questioned he seals his plighted faith, and so next is fed on the fatness of the Body of the Lord, the Eucharist to wit".² The ring and seal evidently refer to Baptism; although there is no authority for supposing that it was ever a part of the Baptismal rite to invest with a ring. But Baptism was enlistment in the army of the faithful, and corresponded to the "ring" mentioned in the parable. Then the neophyte is fed with what the writer calls, in his strong and somewhat crude style, the "fatness of the Body of the Lord" (*opimitate Domini corporis*), "that is, the Eucharist". The Eucharist is thus termed, without qualification, the Body of the Lord.

Origen, the greatest genius of the Greek patristic host, lived about the same time as Tertullian; he died A.D. 254. He represents the tradition of the great Church of Alexandria. The passages in which he calls the Holy Eucharist the Body of the Lord are too numerous even to refer to. Let the following suggestive citations suffice. He thus writes in his treatise *Against Celsus*: "Let Celsus, as being ignorant of God,

¹ Cap. vii.

² Cap. ix.

render Eucharistic gifts to demons; but we, giving thanks to the Maker of all things, do also eat the loaves that have been offered with thanksgiving and prayer over the gifts (loaves) now become by prayer a holy Body—holy, and making holy those who use it with salutary purpose”.¹ The phrase a “holy Body” may be also translated, “a Body, a holy thing” (σῶμα . . . ἅγιόν τι). There was no need for the Apologist to say whose Body it was. Let us observe that he says that, in the Eucharist, the Bread “becomes,” or “is made,” the Body. In another of his writings we find the well-known passage in which he refers to the dropping of a particle of the consecrated Host. “You who have been accustomed,” he says, “to be present at the Divine mysteries, know that when you receive the Body of the Lord, you take care with all caution and veneration lest any part thereof, however small, should fall, lest any portion of the consecrated gift should be lost.”² Finally, in his commentaries in the Prophet Jeremias, he thus refers to the Easter Communion: “If thou wilt go up with Christ to celebrate the pass-over, He will both give to thee that Bread of benediction His own Body and will vouchsafe to thee His own Blood”.³

St. Cyprian, in whose strong personality and wonderful gift of speech is impersonated the Carthaginian Church of the third century, was martyred A.D. 258—four years after the death of Origen. He did not write in defence of the doctrine of the Real Presence, any more than the other ecclesiastical writers of his age. But we find in his eloquent remains the clearest undesigned proof that, in his day and in his sphere of Catholicism, the Holy Eucharist was named without qualification, the Body and Blood of the Lord. For example: we find him in Epistle x. reproving certain

¹ *Contra Celsum*, n. 33, p. 766.

² *Hom.*, xiii., in *Exod.*, n. 3.

³ *Ibid.*, xviii., in *Jerem.*, n. 13.

presbyters for being too easy with the Lapsed. "These presbyters," he says, "before penance has been undergone, before confession has been made . . . before hands have been imposed by the Bishops and clergy unto penitence, dare . . . to give them the Eucharist, that is, to profane the holy Body of the Lord." Another subject frequently treated by the holy Bishop is the preparation of the faithful for the trials of martyrdom. Above all, he says, they must receive Holy Communion—"for how can we teach them, or urge them, to shed their blood, if we refuse them, when on the eve of the combat, the blood of Christ?"¹ In another passage he plainly refers to the custom then prevailing of receiving the Holy Communion in the right hand—"Let us arm our right hand with the sword of the Spirit, that it may courageously reject the fatal sacrifices; that it may remember the Eucharist, and that as it has received the Body of the Lord it may embrace Him, and so at the last day receive from the Lord the reward of a heavenly crown".² There is yet another topic which gives St. Cyprian an occasion of testifying on the Real Presence. It was very common in those days of heathen domination for weak Christians to deny their faith by partaking of things offered to idols—which, as he expresses it, was equivalent to worshipping at the altar of devils. Of these fallen brethren he says that it frequently happened that they came straight from these abominations to holy Communion—"Returning from the devil's altars, they come, with hands unclean and still reeking, unto the holy thing of the Lord . . . they invade (or fall with violence upon) the Body of the Lord." . . . "Violence is offered to His body and blood, and they now sin more against the Lord with hands and mouth than when they denied Him."³

¹ Ep. 54, *ad Cornelium*. Hartel, II., 651.

² Ep. 56, *ad Thibaritanos*, par. 9. Hartel, II., 665.

³ *De lapsis*, 15, 16.

All these very plain and clear testimonies are taken from the words of those who wrote during the period of the persecutions. We may now bring forward one or two witnesses from the great age of the Doctors of the Church which begins with St. Cyril of Jerusalem (386) and ends with St. Leo the Great (461).

We may begin by drawing attention to the Council of Nicæa itself. Any expression which is incorporated in the text of this great Council is, without doubt, a Catholic expression. The Council says: "Neither Canon nor custom has handed down that those who have not authority to offer should give the Body of Christ to those who do offer".¹ The Canon cited forbids deacons to give the holy Communion to priests; and so we have the unqualified expression "the Body of Christ," as an equivalent for the holy Eucharist. Is it possible to doubt that, in those days, every Catholic called the Eucharist the Body of Christ?

St. Cyril of Jerusalem was Bishop of that city for thirty-five years, but of these he passed sixteen in exile. He died A.D. 386. His precious volume of discourses, addressed to those who were about to be baptised, called *Catecheses Mystagogicæ*, contain a very full and convincing statement of the Real Presence, and of its consequences. For example, we have the following in i., n. 7: "When the invocation has been made, the bread becomes the Body of Christ and the wine the Blood of Christ". But the fourth discourse is wholly occupied with this subject, and expressly intended to be an instruction to the newly baptised on a subject on which they had hitherto been kept in the dark. St. Cyril first repeats the words of institution. He then appeals to his hearers not to dare to doubt, since Christ Himself has declared concerning the bread, that it is His Body; not to dare to say, This is not My Blood, when He Himself has pronounced that it is; "wherefore, do

¹ Canon 18.

not contemplate the bread and the wine as bare (bread and wine), for they are, according to the declaration of the Lord, Christ's Body and Blood". . . . "What seems bread is not bread, even though bread to the taste, but Christ's Body, and what seems wine is not wine, even though the taste will have it so, but Christ's Blood." The following Catechism concludes with the well-known directions for receiving the holy Communion; these we shall have to comment upon farther on.

We might now cite among others, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. Cyril of Alexandria, and, above all, St. John Chrysostom. No one can for a moment doubt that all these great Catholic doctors and witnesses of tradition used the words Body and Blood of Christ, simply, emphatically, and most literally, of the holy Eucharist. But as there are many easily accessible books in which their testimonies are collected and enforced, it will be enough to bring forward, as an exponent of the faith of the Western Church, St. Augustine.

With St. Augustine it is difficult to know where to begin. In a sermon¹ addressed *Ad Infantes*—to the newly baptised—he explains to them the mystery to which they have been for the first time admitted. "You ought to know," he says, "what you have received, what you are about to receive, what you ought every day to receive. The bread which you see on the altar, after being sanctified by the word of God, is the Body of Christ. That chalice, or rather that which the chalice contains, after being sanctified by the word of God, is the Blood of Christ. By these things it was the will of Christ to commend (or to commit to us) His Body and the Blood which He shed for us unto the remission of sins." This seems plain enough, and strong enough. And when the holy doctor, as he does in numberless passages, lays stress upon the propriety of fasting com-

¹ CCXXVII.

munion, or comments upon the bread of heaven mentioned in the Psalm, or explains the mysterious phrase : "Why do I carry my soul in my hands,"¹ or treats of the "illumination" which Christ was to bestow upon the world, or pours forth his heart in fervent exposition of the words of the sixth chapter of St. John, or unfolds the hidden meaning of the marriage feast—on such occasions and numberless others he sets down such plain, unqualified, solicitous, serious, emphatic statements, that it is impossible to escape the conviction, that he would have adopted the expressions of the Council of Trent, not only without difficulty, but as affording the only adequate statement of Catholic truth.

It follows from this rapid survey of the New Testament and of the early Fathers, that the Evangelists and the Christian teachers of the first four centuries were used to call the Eucharist without qualification the Body and Blood of Christ. It was beyond doubt (*vere*) the Body of Christ ; it was no figure, but was really (*realiter*) the Body of Christ ; and it was the Body of Christ as fully and completely as that sacred Body which appeared on the earth, suffered, died, and rose again (*substantialiter*).

¹ Job xiii. 14.

CHAPTER III.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

FOR plain people, the statement that the Holy Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the outward appearances of bread and wine might well suffice. As a fact, it did suffice—speaking broadly—for a thousand years. It sufficed for the Apostolic Church; for the martyrs; for the Fathers and Doctors; for the monks, for the missionaries and the general body of the faithful who lived, served God, and went to judgment, from the beginnings of the Church to the time when Europe became virtually Christian. But a time was sure to come—and it did come, in the tenth century—when restless spirits, and even devout and learned men, in the cloisters and the schools which were beginning to rise in the comparative peace and quietude of the Western Church—for questions to be asked and answers to be given. It is natural to man whenever his mind has an intellectual proposition before it, to scrutinise its terms, to analyse them, and to formulate, one after another, statements—positive, negative, hypothetical, conditional—grounded upon the original proposition and suggested by it. Some of those statements will be recognised as true, and they will by degrees come to form a body of truth which will enlarge the bounds of the original truth, and which will be taught to those who would not perhaps have discovered them for themselves. Others will be at once seen to be erroneous, and

will be dismissed ; but even these will be noted, remembered, and learnt by scholars, for the purpose of protecting the original doctrine. Others, again, will not at first sight be set down as either right or wrong. There will be hesitation, as to whether they are, or are not, valid inferences and just deductions from the proposition which originated them. The language of Christian revealed truth, like other statements, is liable to be treated in these various ways. Indeed, it is by a process of this kind that revealed truth grows and develops, retains its living efficacy as time goes on, and is brought into contact, generation after generation, with the facts, the conceptions and the aspirations which mark the never-resting progress of the human race. Were the mind of the devout believer forbidden to dissect and compare the terms of the dogmas he accepts, those dogmas would harden into wooden formularies, which he would put away in some more or less honourable niche of his intelligence, and then pursue his own intellectual and moral life without further reference to them. We see this amply exemplified in the Protestant dogmas of the "Bible only," of inspiration, and of justification by faith. They are now in the position either of a dead fetish, or of an exploded fallacy. They will not work in real life ; hence, among the descendants of their originator one-half proclaim them loudly but make no use of them ; the rest reject them or twist them out of all recognition.

The Catholic Church, from the beginning, has consistently encouraged human reason to occupy itself with her dogmatic teaching. But she has always warned the student and the inquirer that human reason cannot be trusted by itself. When the mind takes up a dogma and sets to work to deduce or to compare, there are results that are clear and beyond question, but there are others, and they form by far the largest proportion, which are liable to be disputed. If the Church had no authority to intervene in the deductive or comparative

work performed by the reason upon Christian dogmas, she might as well abdicate her office. For if it were permissible, in a vital matter, that two schools, holding opposite and contradictory deductions, should exist within her bosom, then it would follow that a dogma could be no more than an empty phrase; for a dogma in these circumstances would be withered and killed, as an intellectual statement, by the impossibility of knowing what it imported. Thus, if the Arian view, that the Word was not very God, could subsist side by side with the Catholic, the person of Jesus Christ, as an intellectual conception, would be as incapable of being grasped as a tower of standing when it is undermined. The dogma of the divinity of Christ would not exist. It is essentially, therefore, a part of the teaching office of the Church that she should control the work of the human reason exercised upon the doctrines of faith.

The history of the word Transubstantiation begins in the twelfth century. Although there is in the early Fathers abundant proof of the Church's belief in a Real Presence, the nature of the operation by which that Presence came about had not been discussed. They speak of the power of the mind of Jesus Christ, which was able to make His sacred Flesh and Blood present under the bread and wine, and of the operation of His divine spirit which produced so marvellous a change in the elements. We even find, as in St. Gregory of Nyssa, the word "transformation" (*μεταποιεῖσθαι*) and, as in St. Ambrose, the "change of nature," the "conversion of nature," "transfiguration" (for he adopts Tertullian's expression in regard to the Incarnation). St. John Damascene, summing up the teachings of the Greek Church in the eighth century, uses the word of St. Gregory of Nyssa (*μεταποίησις*). This was as far as Greek theology got in the discussion of the nature of the Eucharistic conversion, and St. John Damascene seems to think that no further explanation is possible. "If thou inquirest," he says, "how it is brought about,

it is sufficient for thee to hear that it is by the Holy Spirit. . . . The mode or manner is impenetrably hidden.”¹ But in the Western Church there were to be many long chapters of exposition and analysis.²

The controversies which led to the official adoption of the word Transubstantiation began in what is called the Carolingian renaissance—that ninth century whose commencement was marked by the coronation of Charlemagne as Roman Emperor. John Scotus Erigena, who had abandoned Ireland for the court of Charles the Bald, seems to possess the distinction of being the first in the history of Christianity who openly attacked the Real Presence. His writings on the Eucharist have perished, but he was condemned by a Council held at Rome in 1038, about two centuries after his death. Between Scotus and Berengarius, who followed him and quoted him—that is between about 850 and 1030—the word Transubstantiation gradually made itself necessary. Paschasius Radbert, the Monk of Corbie, (850) who has left the earliest monograph on the Eucharist in his treatise *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini*, uses these words; “the substance of the Bread is effectively changed within into the Flesh of Christ” (*substantia—efficaciter interius mutatur*). His treatise became the great authority on the Eucharist in the Western Church. Haymo of Halberstadt writes that “the substance or nature of bread and wine is *substantially* changed into another substance, namely the Flesh and Blood (of Christ)”.³ In the formula of recantation which Berengarius was required to sign by the Council of Rome in 1079, the terms used are, as in Paschasius, “substantially converted” (*substantialiter converti*). The

¹ *De Fide orthodoxa*, iv., 13; Migne, P. G., xciv., p. 1145.

² Two other words may be noted in the Greek Fathers to express the Eucharistic conversion—μεταρρύθμισις, or transnumeration, used by St. John Chrysostom, and μεταβολή, or simple change, by St. Cyril of Jerusalem. See the *Etudes* of Mgr. Batiffol (*Conversion et Transsubstantiation*), to which I am indebted for much information.

³ P. L., cxviii., 816.

word "substance" is now insisted upon. In an interesting text of about A.D. 1100, Algerius of Liège lays it down that the "substance is changed, not the form (or appearance), and thus . . . the existing substance of bread and wine is changed into the co-existent substance of the Body of Christ".¹ If the work of St. Peter Damian, *Expositio Canonis Missae*, is not genuine, the earliest occurrence of the word Transubstantiation seems to be in a passage of Hildebert de Lavardin († 1133). It occurs in a Decretal of Innocent III. († 1216). The Fourth Council of Lateran fully adopts it (1215), and it is a consecrated term in Albertus Magnus, Alexander of Hales and St. Thomas Aquinas. It had by this time been finally adopted by the Catholic Church. It had been introduced into Catholic theology in the same way, and under the same necessity, that several other dogmatic words had been introduced—invented, if you wish. When new error is broached, or new aspects and relations of a doctrine are realised by the intellect, you require, in order to meet the error or to guard the doctrine, not only argument and definition, but also, if possible, a word—a term—which puts the truth in a nutshell, and which is, for future use, a symbol of a finished controversy. Thus we have had the word *ὁμοούσιος* added to the Creed, to make all denials of our Lord's divinity thenceforth impossible. Thus also we have the term *θεοτόκος*, *Deipara*, to formulate our Lady's prerogative. The word Transubstantiation expresses in an emphatic and more definite way that Real Presence—that change which supervenes on the elements—which, as we have seen, was recognised from the beginning.

But it will be useful, at this point, to set down what the Council of Trent says on the subject of Transubstantiation. There are two principal passages which concern us in that Council's Decrees and Canons.

¹ P. L., clxxx., 766.

The first is from Session xiii., cap. iv.: "Seeing that Christ our Redeemer hath said that that which He offered under the appearance (*specie*) of Bread was truly His Body, therefore it hath ever been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Synod declares it afresh, that there happens a conversion (*conversionem fieri*) of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the Body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His Blood; which conversion conveniently and with propriety is called by the holy Catholic Church Transubstantiation".

The second is from the first Canon or definition of the same chapter: "If any one shall deny that in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist is truly, really, and substantially the Body and Blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore Christ wholly and entirely (*totum Christum*); but shall say that it is therein only as a sign, or figuratively, or virtually; let him be anathema". And Canon ii. of the same chapter declares: "If any one shall say that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist there remains the substance of Bread and of Wine, together with the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and shall deny that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of bread into the Body and of the whole substance of wine into the Blood, the species only of the bread and wine remaining—which conversion the Catholic Church most aptly calls Transubstantiation—let him be anathema".

On these pronouncements of the Council of Trent it may be remarked, first of all, that the two words which the Council uses to define Transubstantiation are "substance" and "species". It never employs the term "accident"; although this word occurs frequently in the Eucharistic portion of the Catechism of the Council. It was objected by Luther that the doctrine of Transubstantiation was invented by the

Schoolmen, and that it rested entirely on the scholastic theory of substance and accident. But the Fourth Council of Lateran was held in 1215, and St. Thomas of Aquinas was not born till 1225. Long before the category of "substance and accident" was familiar in the schools of the West, Transubstantiation was a common word, used to mean what it means in the Council of Trent, the conversion of one substance into another; and the word employed to express what was not changed was "species," signifying that which appeared to the eye and the other senses. This word "species" we find in all the ninth, tenth, and eleventh century writers. It was not in any strict sense a scholastic word. It was a word taken from literature. Just as "substance" meant the thing itself, so "species" meant the thing as it affected the senses. The Scholastics, although they held many discussions on "substance" and pursued it into a multitude of relations, never ceased to consider it as what common sense called the thing itself. So they refined on the word "species," and called the species the accidents. The Church, to a certain extent, did adopt the word "accidents"—and we find the Council of Constance and Pope Martin V. condemning Wyclif for denying that, in the Holy Eucharist, accidents remain without a subject. And without insisting too strongly that the scholastic philosophy of "substance and accident" is involved in the Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation—for such an assertion would require careful qualification—it may be said that so far as "accident" implies and covers "species," it has been taken into the Church's official phraseology. "Species" means simply the "appearances". As we shall see just now, these "appearances" are accurately described as "accidents".

Transubstantiation, then, to the Council of Trent, and to Catholic dogma, means the conversion of the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, in such a complete manner that none of the substance of

the Bread or Wine remains, but only the species thereof. It implies that our Lord's Body does not come by being moved thither locally, or by being created afresh, but by the Bread being changed into it. It implies that, in the Eucharistic consecration, the substance of bread (or of wine) ceases or comes to an end ; next, that our Lord's Sacred Body comes, and is truly and really there ; thirdly, that the bread is "converted into" His Body ; fourthly, that the accidents, or qualities of the bread or wine (called by the Council the *species*, or appearances) continue and exist apart from, and without, the substance of the bread or wine ; and fifthly that the "conversion" here laid down is fittingly called by the name of Transubstantiation.

These are not mere words. They are words, indeed, which express and formulate a wonderful work of God Almighty, which our resources are altogether inadequate to explain or comprehend. But they are not random words. They suppose and imply certain views as to material substance. If those views are accepted, the miracle will be—not explained, certainly—but placed before the intelligence of men in such a way that human reason will find in it nothing that contradicts its own principles and laws. On the other hand, it appears certain that the rejection of the Real Presence by non-Catholics—apart from their contention that it is not warranted by Holy Scripture—is really grounded on their notions as to what material substance is.

Now the Catholic philosophy of material substance—as far as there is a Catholic philosophy—is necessarily plain, simple and elementary ; because if it were complex and obscure it would be a philosophy of the human schools and not of the Catholic millions. We may, or may not, think that much can be known about material substance ; but it seems to me that our very primitive and unsophisticated intellectual conceptions furnish us with three ideas about it, that we must either accept, or give up pretending to know anything

about it at all. The first is, that matter is essentially different from spirit. The second is, that material things have a real existence, and are not the mere creation of our faculties, but are external and objective. And the third is, that material things are not merely sense-exciting qualities, possibilities of sensation, but that thing and quality are distinct. Thus, a tree is not a creation of my mind, but exists quite independently of any faculty; and if all men with all their faculties were destroyed, it might still exist. And thus again, a tree is a different thing from its own size, shape or taste, and can be conceived to exist apart from them.

For the moment, I will say nothing of matter as compared with spirit. That material substance has an objective reality, independent of our senses or intellect, is, I conceive, a primary truth. There have been Sceptics, and there are Idealists. The Sceptic denies that we can have any valid knowledge of anything outside our own consciousness. No one ever attempts to argue with a sceptic. There is no foot-hold for an argument; he does not admit your first terms. You can only point out to him that his views, or rather his negations, are a violent contradiction of the primitive and unforced pointings of his own mind. Of Idealists there are many kinds and degrees. The Idealist, whilst not always denying that there is, outside of a man's consciousness, something not one's self, something independent, something permanent, denies that there is any substance or real thing, maintaining that all there is is the quality or appearance that affects the eye or ear. Idealists will tell you that what we call substance is really only a kind of more or less permanent possibility of sensation. Hence, with them, quality cannot be separated from substances, because quality is substance. It was Locke who gave the lead to English philosophy in this direction.

Now, to my mind, and, I am convinced, to all who have really studied it, what I venture to call the Catholic

philosophy seems absolutely irrefragable. The moment you cease being an absolute sceptic—the moment you admit anything outside of consciousness—anything you do not yourself create—anything permanent—anything independent of your own brain—you admit a substance. For you admit something which, instead of being the creation of your fancy, can itself act upon your faculties. You admit a thing which, as it is not the creation of your faculty, goes on existing whether it affect your faculty or not, and which, indeed, would so continue even if all finite faculty were to cease to be. This is what we mean by substantial reality. The proof that there is such reality can never be a demonstration; because all that the reason can be brought face to face with are subjective impressions, and the objective reality can never be touched either by the hand or by the spirit. But there may be certainty without absolute demonstration. What our senses tell us of is a permanent, uniform, group of sense-excitations, independent of the sentient subject. It is so certain that such groups indicate a permanent, independent, individual thing, that we may truly say, if there is no such “thing,” human faculty is useless, and life without a purpose. This is not a question of physical science—of atoms or molecules, of electrons, of motion or force. What the Catholic philosophy demands is that material substance, whatever it be in ultimate physical analysis, must be outside the sentient subject, independent, subsisting by itself, and real as distinguished from ideal.

When we come to distinguish material substance, as thus described, from its own qualities, we are met half-way by science itself. The great stumbling-block to the scientific mind is to admit anything except qualities. Even those philosophers who accept something outside of their own minds, and other than their own minds, will maintain that what there is, is only a kaleidoscope of qualities, primary and secondary, which shift and group themselves according to some obscure law,

but beyond which we have no right to say there is any *thing*. As we have seen, the Catholic philosophy, resting on inferences which can hardly be called inferences because they are rather primitive laws of human nature, apprehends beneath these qualities a permanent thing. But the qualities are real as well as the thing. The qualities spring from and depend upon the thing. If the thing departs or ceases to be, they also depart or cease. Some Catholic philosophers hold that there is one quality which depends upon the thing or substance, *viz.*, the quality of extension, and that the other qualities depend upon or inhere in extension. This seems very probable. Extension is the name of that part-beyond-part continuousness, which is of the very essence of material substance. On the other hand, colour, and other sense-impressions are, objectively, modifications of extension. And here we must always remember that modern physical theories of sense-excitation make no difference in what regards these metaphysical views. Your organ may be stimulated by waves, or by atoms, by the ether or by electricity ; it always remains true that the outside thing stimulates it. Now the disposition *in* the outside thing which enables it so to stimulate is the quality.

The dogma of the Holy Eucharist requires us to acknowledge that the substance or thing may, by the supernatural power of God, be separated from its qualities—or, to put it in the inverse way, that qualities may exist and act although the thing, substance or subject to which they naturally belong has departed or ceased to be. It is impossible to prove that this is a contradiction in terms. It is impossible to prove that there is any inherent absurdity in it. All that could be said by the acutest reasoner would be that there is no proof that there is anything at all such as as you call substance. For this we are prepared ; and we take our stand on the primitive inference spoken of above.

No Catholic reader should find it strange that we put,

at the beginning of a discussion on the Holy Eucharist, a theory of material substance. The Holy Eucharist is a fact which is transacted in the realm of matter. If there is no difference between matter and spirit, or if there is nothing at all outside of consciousness, or if material substance and its qualities are one and the same, then the dogma of the Real Presence is not merely a contradiction in terms, but it is a statement whose terms and the asserted nexus between them are merely idle breath. In spite, therefore, of the numerous and profound disquisitions on knowledge and its objects which the present generation of University professors and others have brought forth, and which discuss at great length what existence is and whether knowledge is possible, the humblest student of Catholic faith must judge for himself, and take his stand upon a certain philosophy of common sense. Unless he does so, undeterred by the denunciation or the contempt of the modern metaphysicians, many another Christian dogma besides the Holy Eucharist will have to be cast aside like worn-out garments.

With this explanation of the philosophy of material substance, we may now go on to comment upon Transubstantiation as defined by the Council of Trent.

We will speak, first, of the conversion itself; next, of the manner of our Lord's presence; and, thirdly, of the species of bread and wine which remain and continue.

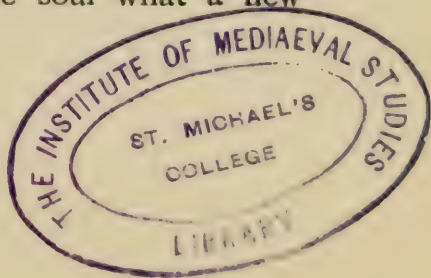
The words of the Council of Trent, however, suggest one or two further preliminary remarks.

The first is on the subject of Faith; of that faith which is required in order to accept the teaching of Holy Scripture, and of the Church, on this venerable Sacrament. The Council says that our Lord's sacramental Presence, is a kind of presence, "which, although it is hardly possible to express it in words, nevertheless in our intellectual apprehension illuminated by Faith (*cogitatione per fidem illustratâ*) we can apprehend to

be possible to God".¹ In order to form a true conception, then, of the way in which our Lord is present in the Eucharist, our understanding must be illuminated by Faith. Now what does this mean? The mention of "Faith," in these days, always sets people thinking of credulity. To the generality of men, and in the common use of language, to accept a thing "by faith," simply means to accept it without adequate reason or proof. In fact, the true conception of Christian Faith is hardly known. It is necessary to have clear views on this subject.

Faith, then, is, first of all, a grace from God; that is, a Divine visitation of the soul's powers, strengthening them towards the acceptance of the things of God. This visitation is a permanent occupancy of the soul, setting up therein what is called a "habit". A "habit" is a kind of instinct or second nature; an instinct that is not a part of one's natural endowment, but either acquired or conferred from outside; conferred, in this case, by Divine operation. The powers which are affected by the habit of Faith are, primarily, the intellect and the intellectual will; and just as the acquired "habit" of playing a musical instrument makes it easier for a man to strike the notes rapidly, accurately and strongly, so the conferred habit of Faith makes it possible for the intellectual powers to act, and to act rightly and strongly, on the things revealed by God. Faith, therefore, in itself is neither a comprehending faculty, nor an assenting faculty, nor a faculty of desire. Comprehension, acceptance, assent, desire, adhesion—these are operations of the mind and will. What Divine Faith does is to elevate them to the capacity of assenting to Divine things as revealed by God, and of adhering to them without doubting. It would be incorrect to regard Faith as a new faculty or power of the soul. Virtually, no doubt, it does for the soul what a new

¹Sess. xiii., cap. i.



faculty would do for it. But strictly the work of "believing," in the sense of Divine Faith, is exercised by the intellect and intellectual will, elevated and strengthened to supernatural operation by the presence of the habit of Divine Faith.

Even from this short exposition it is clear that Faith is a very different thing from "credulity," and that to "believe" in the Catholic sense is no mere interior, irrational, subjective impulse, independent of the exercise of common sense. The precise element which constitutes this act called "Faith" is the acceptance of a doctrine or fact on the authority of God. There can be no such thing as an act of Faith, therefore, unless it is sufficiently clear and certain to my mind that God has spoken. No man is expected to believe unless he is reasonably satisfied on this head. He is expected to be sincerely in earnest; he is expected to pray; he is expected to lay aside prejudice and temper. For these things he requires the grace of God. But he is not expected to accept what he cannot be reasonably certain is God's revelation. In order to be reasonably certain, it is not required that he should be a profound scholar or an acute reasoner. For scholars and deep thinkers there is plenty of satisfaction in Catholicism, and the more they penetrate its dogmas the more clearly will they see that they are beyond all hesitation credible. But the more ignorant, the busy, the slow-witted, and the young have the means of acquiring a practical certainty. Life could not go on if we could not in a multitude of things be certain without elaborate investigation. Every man is certain that the sun will rise on the morrow. Every man is certain that there is such a place as Rome, although he has never seen it. If a servant tells me that a carriage is at the door, I have, under ordinary circumstances, no doubt that there is. So, the testimony of parents, of teachers, of priests, of a universal Body like the Church; the knowledge that certain books are in existence and are acknow-

ledged to be authorities by the majority of the Community ; these motives, or even one of them, may make man or child reasonably certain that God has spoken.

Is this certainty, then, it will be asked, all that Faith comes to? Very far from it. This is the predisposition for Faith. Faith proper now begins to be. Man's intellectual powers—his intellect and his will—now incline to their God in homage, love and obedience, they bow down before His authority, and they adhere with a firmness and intensity which only Faith can impart, to that proposed verity in which they recognise His revealing word.

We can thus understand what the Council means when it says that God's power to cause Himself to be present in that most wonderful way which is called "sacramental," can be apprehended to be possible. The fact of the sacramental Presence is certain to any one who reads the New Testament narrative ; especially, if such a person has any intelligent appreciation of the clear and continuous tradition which connects the New Testament age with our own. This certainty being presupposed—that is, the mind seeing that the Real Presence is clearly credible—the virtue of Divine Faith inclines the heart and intelligence to hold this object of Divine Revelation with the utmost firmness, with childlike submission, with piety, with tenderness. God's power is infinite. Whatever is not intrinsically repugnant, He can effect. This is an occasion altogether worthy of a miracle. He tells us that the miracle exists ; what is there to prevent us from accepting it? I do not see how the bread ceases to be ; but the word "conversion" gives a glimmer of light. I do not see how a bodily substance can exist without making itself sensible to me ; but, on the other hand, I have no reason to suppose that this is an impossibility. Therefore, I will put away all doubt, and I will study, as far as I can, to see the likelihood, the plausibility, the congruousness, of the Real Presence ; and in this my Faith will help me.

CHAPTER IV.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION (*Continued*).

THE CONVERSION OF THE BREAD AND WINE INTO THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST.

THE conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body of our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into His Blood, is called by the Council of Trent, "wonderful," and "singular".¹ That is to say, it is a conversion, or change of one thing into another, which is outside of the order of nature, or which transcends nature, and it is the only one of its kind, whether in the natural order or the supernatural.

We have in this word "conversion"—used not for ordinary conversion, but for that which is rightly called "Transubstantiation"—a very distinct light upon the most mysterious fact of the Eucharistic change. It is not without Divine guidance that the Church has adopted this word. It appears to explain—at least in a negative and veiled way—how the elements cease to be, and how the sacred Body and Blood take their place. For how, and whence does that sacred Body come, upon the utterance of the words of consecration?

It is certain that it does not move from heaven (where it now is), as if our Lord descended by local movement upon the earth. For it still remains in the

¹ "Mirabilem illam et singularem conversionem," Session xiii., Can. 2.

heavens where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and whence He will come at the last day to judge the living and the dead. It is certain also that the Christ who is in heaven and who is present in the Eucharist on all the altars of the world, is the one individual Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, slain upon the cross, who went up to heaven in the sight of the disciples. I do not see, therefore, how it can be said that our Lord's body is "brought" to the altar (*adductus*); although the word is used by some theologians. To be thus "brought" would seem to imply that it moved, or that it was multiplied. We cannot say either of these things, without making explanations which really explain them away. Neither would I say that our Lord's Body was "created" afresh under the species—which is the real meaning some theologians have in view when they use the word "produced" (*productus*). This phrase is injurious to the word "conversion," which is the Catholic word. And, in my opinion, we do not do well in going beyond it. The bread is *changed into* the Body of Christ. That is the way it comes. It is changed into the very Body now in the heavens. You will say that such a conversion is sheer creation. The bread is annihilated; the sacred Body is produced by Divine power. But the Church never says that the bread is annihilated. She says, it wholly ceases, and nothing of its substance remains; but she says, at the same time, that it is turned into the Body of Christ. This clearly denotes an intrinsic connection between the ceasing of the bread and the coming of the Body; now if the former is annihilated and the latter created, there is no such intrinsic connection, and therefore the process effected by the words of consecration would, as I submit, not be "properly" (*proprie*) called a conversion, or indeed, properly called Transubstantiation. The "conversion" is not, certainly, as other changes. When food is changed into flesh, chemical elements into tissue, there is some subject common both to the former object

and the latter ; something goes, something comes and something remains. But this Eucharistic conversion, as the Council says, is "singular". There is no other instance of it. It is a true "conversion," and yet the whole substance of the bread ceases ; even the *materia prima* of the bread ceases to be. How, it may be asked, is the notion of "conversion" here justified ? I reply, that this is exactly the mystery of Transubstantiation. If there were anything in the Universe of God—anything in the wide unexplained realm of His almighty power—which were common to the bread and the Body of Christ, and yet neither substance nor accident, neither spirit, nor matter, nor relation, our minds could have no conception or imagination of such a thing, any more than we can have of a fourth dimension. But there may be ; just as in the Blessed Trinity, where there is multiplication of personality without multiplication of essence there is clearly some awfully transcendental mode of being in the nature of the Infinite (to speak humanly) for which we have neither idea nor name. There is, therefore, no doubt, some common atmosphere, some relationship far out of the realm of all the relationships that the human mind knows, some hyper-spiritual alchemy which even the cherubim cannot penetrate, which makes the passing of the bread into the Body of Christ to be a true "conversion," and not a mere annihilation of the one and a production of the other. It cannot fail to strike any one who studies the language used by the Fathers on the Holy Eucharist how they insist upon the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the "gifts," that is upon the bread and wine. Let us cite, for example, St. Cyril of Jerusalem. Speaking to the newly baptised he says : "We beseech the goodness of God to send forth the Holy Spirit upon the gifts set forth, that He may make the bread the Body of Christ."¹ Such expressions seem

¹ *Catech. mystagogica* V.

to exclude the idea of annihilation. Were the bread to be annihilated, it would surely have been more exact to say that the Holy Spirit withdrew from it, blighted its substance, cut off the Divine influence by which it existed. But such language we never find. It seems certain, therefore, that annihilation is not the word; but that the coming down of the Holy Spirit changes, transmutes, transubstantiates, in some true, though hidden and ineffable sense, the elements offered on the altar into the sacred Body and Blood. The consequence of this is, that we need not find any other word to explain the access or coming of our Lord. If I could change water into wine, I should not want to say how the wine came there. I should not want to say that it was "brought," "produced," "introduced" or "substituted". I should simply say that the water was changed into it, and so it was there. The Eucharistic conversion is an operation that takes place in a very different plane; on a plane beyond human ascertaining, far back in the incomprehensibility of the Divine power. But it is a "conversion"; and that is the word by which we must account both for the ceasing of the elements and the coming of the Body of the Lord.

THE MANNER IN WHICH OUR LORD IS "PRESENT" IN THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

We have next to speak of the way, or manner, or mode, in which our Blessed Lord is present in the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.

As we have already seen, the dogma of the Holy Eucharist requires us to accept that a material substance may be separated from its own qualities. In this, as already observed, there is no intrinsic impossibility, except on the theory of those who consider that a material substance is and consists of its qualities and nothing more. But what is there absurd in holding

that the colour or the shape of bread, although it arises from the substance of the bread, is yet a distinct thing from the bread? And if I find this implied in a dogma of my religion, why am I irrational in accepting it? It is certainly not the only example of a revealed fact implying a view on the nature of matter. Believers in the New Testament accept as divinely revealed the fact that our Lord's risen body passed through the walls or door of a house.¹ If this happened, no believer can hold that the passing of one body through another is a contradiction in terms, or a metaphysical impossibility. Neither can any such believer hold that the shape or hardness of a body may not, by Divine power, be separated from it.

But in analysing our conceptions and regulating our language on the manner of our Lord's Eucharistic presence, it will not do to say, or think, that our Lord in the Holy Eucharist has no dimension; no length, breadth, shape or parts. For our Lord in the Eucharist is whole and entire, as He is in the heavens, without alteration or diminution.² How, then, can our Lord, with all the parts and dimensions of His sacred body, be within the little round of the consecrated Host?

We do not profess to understand how this can be. But it would seem quite reasonable and possible. For what is it that would make it impossible for the dimensions of the Body of Christ to be within the dimensions of the Host? Only this—that there was contact between the dimensions and shape of the one, and the dimensions and shape of the other. But suppose that there was no such contact? As a fact, in the case of the Holy Eucharist, there is no contact. The words of consecration change the substance of the Bread into the *substance* of our Saviour's Body. That is, the substance of our Lord's Body is under the species; but the words of consecration do not bring His dimen-

¹ St. John xx. 19.

² *Totum Christum Conc. Trid., Cap. xiii., Can. 1.*

sions or shape under the species. True, the dimensions and shape are there, but not in the localised sense of "there". That is, they have no relation to, or contact with, the species. If you insist that where a body is, there are its parts, we reply that it is one thing for the parts to be there, and another that those parts should be measurable or definable on and by the dimensions which surround them. It is not imaginable, but it is quite conceivable. Our Lord's body is not touched, or circumscribed, or bounded, by the species. Its parts have no point of contact in any point with the Host. It is of no avail to say, If the Eucharistic Body had size that size would be manifested; it would outspan the Host. We answer that this would be so but for the special and marvellous way in which that Body is contained in the Host—*viz.*, by the presence of its substantiality, and not by the mutual contact of dimensions. It has, therefore, its natural parts, as in Heaven, one related to the other. It has its natural figure; it has head, trunk, limbs, heart and hands. But you cannot compare them with this or that point or portion of the Host. Sand in a glass is in contact on all sides with the glass, and can be measured by it. If the substance alone of the sand were compared or related to the inner surface of the glass, the sand would be as before, and the glass would be as before, but there would be no way of saying that the sand was up to such a point, or measured so much across, or had such a configuration in the glass—because the very basis of such conceptions, *viz.*, contact of dimension with dimension, of surface with surface, would be wanting.

Keeping this firmly in mind, that the sacred Body is under the species *per modum substantiæ*—after the manner of a substance, and not of a measured impenetrable, it is easy to see in what sense we can say that it is in "place" or "localised" in the Holy Eucharist. It cannot be said to be "in place" in the proper, or circumscriptive, use of that term.

There are several senses in which "place" is used. In a certain sense, a spirit, or even Almighty God, may be said to be in "place"—as when we say that God is everywhere, or that an Angel dwells in a human form. But as a spirit has no parts or dimensions by which it can come into contact with material boundaries, all that we mean in these instances is that such spirit operates within such boundaries, or is "there" by there exercising its power. On the other hand, the material substances that compose this universe are said to be in "place" because they touch the bodies that respectively bound them. This is what is meant by "localisation," literally and properly. So that a body cannot be properly in "place" unless its dimensions are bounded by other dimensions. The peculiar and marvellous mode of the Eucharistic Presence is that it is neither that of a spirit nor that of ordinary material things. Our Lord's Body is not a spirit; and although it is truly said to be in the Holy Eucharist after the manner of a spirit, yet this statement is an analogy only. It is in place after the manner of a material substance deprived of actual dimensions, actual shape, actual extended parts; of a substance, therefore, which has no point of contact with any material surroundings; a substance of which place, in its formal sense, cannot be predicated. Therefore it can be in many places at once; because the truth is, that it is (properly) in none of them. It cannot be moved from one place to another; because it is in no place to begin with. It is wholly in every particle or division of the species; because the species do not contain it as a stone is contained by the clay in which it is embedded, or a man's body by its surroundings—but in a way quite special to the Holy Eucharist, *viz.*, as substance with no dimensive relation.

It has no relation to this or that portion of the Host's superficies or quantity; to this point, or that line, or that curve. Its relation is with the species as such—so that in whatever particle of the Host the species of

bread are verified, in that is the Real Presence. It cannot be touched by the hand or seen by the sense; because touch and other sensations can only be affected by contact; and the contact is with the species; whilst the qualities or properties of our Lord's sacred Body are out of touch, not only with the lips of men, but with the species themselves. It cannot be broken or divided; it is only the species that can be broken. It cannot be affected by injury from man, from animals, or from the elements. Whatever may chance, whatever devotion, or impiety, care or violence, may bring about in the world into which He has deigned to enter, in the Sacrament He is unchanged, always safe, always undisturbed.

If any one says that such a condition of material substance is impossible, we are warranted in denying such an assertion altogether. There is nothing intrinsically contradictory in saying that material substance can be deprived of actual dimension. The conception no doubt calls for a certain recognition of a world outside of our subjective selves which the modern philosopher only admits with grudging and hesitation. Things, potencies, existences, powers, such as are here clearly indicated, are set down by modern teachers as the work of the imagination; as gratuitous suppositions; as idle dreams. But if we hold an external world of substantial existences independent of mind, but dependent upon God, there cannot be much difficulty in seeing that these external undeniable realities may be subject to changes as real as themselves, and that there may be laws affecting their inmost constitution quite as firmly imbedded in the reality of the universe as those which our daily experience witnesses to in the sphere that comes within our observation. The revelation of the Real Presence, unless it is to be considered meaningless, implies certain philosophical conceptions. All that we are absolutely concerned with is to see that such conceptions are not self-contradictory. This we

can see. For the rest, the revelation of the dogma opens out a glimpse into the mysteries of the world out of sight which we should never have had by the power of human reason unassisted.

At the same time, the instinct of the faithful persists in speaking of the sacred Body as "present" on the altar or in the tabernacle, and as capable of being moved and carried from place to place; and the language of the Church altogether authorises this way of speaking. To use the language of the schools, our Lord's Body in the Holy Eucharist is rightly said to be moved *per accidens*; that is, it is not literally moved, but on account of something else being moved it receives new relations to certain extrinsic objects. Thus a man who rides in a moving train is moved himself; but if an Angel dwelt in a material sphere, the sphere might be moved but not the Angel; the Angel could not receive that immutation which we call motion; he is out of the plane or possibility of local motion. But if the sphere in which he dwelt were moved, let us say from London to Paris, the Angel would be moved from London to Paris *per accidens*; that is, his power would be exercised now with certain relations to Paris, whilst hitherto it had been exercised with certain relations to London. It is somewhat in this manner that it is true to say that the Body of Christ is "moved" in the Holy Eucharist. We must remember that, by virtue of the words of consecration, that Body takes up a special and most intimate connection with the species of the bread and wine. The bread ceasing to be, its own species, and no others, remain, for the purpose of keeping up the appearance of bread to the external senses whilst Christ now is there instead of bread. The species, therefore, belong to the Body of Christ—not as accidents belong to their own subject, but like a containing condition, a chosen vesture, a vehicle of Divine effect. Thus they impart, or lend, their "locality" to the unlocalised Body of Christ. When they are there, He

is justly said to be there. When they are moved by the reverent hands of the minister, He is said to be moved. When they are received, He is received. When they are destroyed or disappear, then without any fresh miracle, but merely in virtue of the past words of consecration and of the condition of things set up by them—the Body of Christ disappears also; it ceases to be present. The species are the conditions of Christ's sacramental existence. They make no difference or immutation in Him; but they are the determination of His external operation, by God's will. Therefore we rightly speak of the consecrated Host as the Body of Christ. And this indeed was the purpose of the sacramental institution—to place Jesus on our altars, and in our hands, and before our eyes, and to enable us to receive Him as our food.

THE CONTINUANCE OF THE SPECIES OF THE BREAD AND THE WINE.

The third point which we undertook to treat in connection with the dogma of Transubstantiation was the fact of the continuance of the species of the bread and the wine after their respective substances had ceased to be.

By the word "species," in the plural, are signified those qualities, or sensible attributes of a substance which receive their existence from that substance and inhere in it, and which can only be detached, or have an independent existence, by a miracle of the power of God. The scholastic name for these "species," appearances, qualities, attributes, is "accidents"; because the theory is, as I have said, that they do not (naturally) stand of themselves, but cluster around a substance as things not strictly of its essence. I consider that the scholastic philosophy, in this matter, only speaks the language of common sense; and, what is more, that its views on this point are really implied in the dogma of Transubstantiation.

It need not be said that "accidents," in the sense of Catholic philosophy and theology, are not admitted in modern science. We have already stated the Catholic philosophy of material substance, and the opposing views of modern writers. But the truth is that these modern views of matter intimately depend upon modern views of what human knowledge is. Substance and accident, in material things, are not admitted because it is maintained that human faculty has no means of getting at them.

Modern theories of knowledge rest on two principles; first, that no inference from the subjective to the objective—from the thinking or sentient subject to an external object—is valid or scientific; and, secondly, that all perception, whether of the sense or of the intellect, has taken its rise in rudimentary shock; that such shock or percussion of the surface has modified (in long lapses of time) the surface into organs; that experiences, hereditary and acquired, have made the organic perceptions more and more complex; that sensitive perception has developed from mere mechanical vibration, which it excels only in degree and not in kind; and that intelligence is a transformation of sensation, but, again, not the introduction of an entirely different power, but only a refinement of those existing. It will be found that all the modern schemes of "psychology," as they call it, are on these lines. They really represent a most interesting body of experiment and deduction, necessarily true in a large degree, as stating facts; but spoiled by the denial of creation, and of the Divine interference when life and intelligence proper were bestowed upon matter. It is certain that sentient life cannot have sprung, by any purely subjective development, from matter that was not sentient. The mere analysis of the act of sensation proves so much. The immanent, uncompounded, unmeasurable element which there is in every act of sensation can never have its principle in the measured and the divisible. The sense is, no doubt, a power that

does not act without organic and material immutation ; but before the personal explosion which we recognise as sensation can take place, the organic and material conditions must be touched by the fire of an immaterial soul. This sentient soul, therefore, must, at some time or other, have been given by a distinct interference of the Creator. As for the intellectual soul of man, not only is it clearly demonstrable that intelligence cannot have grown out of sense and matter, and that the act of intelligence, being cognisant of universals, must have for principle a power entirely above matter and organism, but it is of the Catholic Faith that this principle—that is, the intellectual soul—is in every instance immediately created by Almighty God. If the modern scientist would recognise these creative interferences, or even this last interference, and at the same time would admit that the acts both of sensation and of intelligence are outside of the capacity of extended matter as such, Catholics would readily acknowledge—as indeed they do—that the experiments, the analysis, and the minute piecing out of the processes of nerve action and brain-work which we find in modern books are not only wonderful, but also, speaking generally, valid and conformable to fact. But Catholics must always hold that the cognitive powers of man are more than the re-action of nerve. They must recognise in them elements derived from a higher sphere than that in which occurs the shock of atoms. There is no sphere of religious thought in which it is so essential to hold a super-sensitive element in human knowledge as in the Holy Eucharist. In speaking the language of the Church on this Mystery, we assert that we can not only know substance outside of our own mind, but can intelligibly recognise certain wonderful occurrences which take place in substance beyond the sphere which sense-knowledge can introduce us to. To speak of “substance,” and of “accident,” and of the ceasing of the one and the continuance of the other, implies the power of moving at ease in a world

that is neither mind nor pure matter; a world of conceptions resting at either end on reality. The doctrine of the Holy Eucharist requires this, and it is entirely in accord with that primitive and universal human philosophy which will certainly never be banished from the world. And if the doctrine of the Real Presence, and of Transubstantiation, as stated in the Catholic terms of "substance," "species," "accident," "conversion" and the rest, is repudiated and opposed by intelligent people at the present day, we must never overlook the fact that it is not mainly on Scriptural grounds, or for religious reasons, but chiefly because their prepossessions as to material substance are different from ours, and their views of the nature and operations of the spiritual soul (upon which all knowledge of an external world depends) tend to shut up as in a narrow prison that human outlook which really is intended to deal with a universe.

Some Catholics, urged by what they consider to be scientifically proved by modern science, are averse from believing in the reality of "accidents" without a subject.

Is the word "accident" then, a Catholic and essential word, or is it merely a term of scholasticism, to which a plain Catholic or an advanced Catholic is in no way bound? To this I answer that although the Council of Trent (Sess. xiii., Can. 2 and 3), following that of the Lateran (Cap. *Firmiter*) uses the word *species* and not *accidentia*, nevertheless the term "accidents" is so firmly embedded in the teaching of the dogma of the Holy Eucharist that any one who rejected that term—who said, for example, that he was ready to confess that the *species* remained but not the accidents, for he did not admit there was such a thing as an "accident"—such a one would justly be suspected of heresy, if not clearly a heretic. The Council of Constance, in the sittings which went on under Pope Martin V., condemned among other propositions of Wyclif, that in

which he denied that "the accidents of bread remain without a subject in the sacrament of the altar". It would seem, indeed, that Wyclif's heretical teaching on the Eucharist was formulated precisely in the terms of the scholastic doctrine of substance and accident. He held that the bread and wine were there still, and in so holding, he gave an additional emphasis to his error by adding what was a corollary, *viz.*, that "the accidents did not remain without a subject". Suarez teaches that it is "of faith" that the accidents, numerically the same as those of the bread and wine, remain without a subject.¹ De Lugo says that this has been "expressly defined" by the Council of Trent.² Billuart asserts that it is a "dogma received without break in the Church" that the accidents remain "solid" as he calls it, without any substance as their subject.³ And the Catechism of the Council of Trent, intended for the use of pastors in the instruction of their flocks, says that "Catholic faith without doubting believes . . . that the accidents are (there) without any subject (*res subjecta*), after a wonderful and inexplicable manner".⁴ St. Thomas's reasoning on this matter is, that since our Blessed Lord uses the words, This is My Body, something must remain of the object changed; otherwise the word "This," vague as it is, would scarcely be verified. Now since the bread does not remain, nor any part or element of the substance of bread, there must remain what is not of the substance of the bread; and the only thing that satisfies these conditions are the accidents.⁵

I do not see, then, how in the Catholic philosophy of the Holy Eucharist we can pretend to reject the term "accidents," or escape from using it. To give to the word "species," used by the Council of Trent, a meaning entirely different from the scholastic "accidents," would

¹ *De Euch.*, Disp. 56, Sect. 1.

² *De Euch.*, Disp. x, Sect. i., n. 1.

³ *De Euch.*, Discerp. i., art. 6, par. 2.

⁴ *De Sac. Eucharistiæ.*

⁵ *Cont. Gentiles*, iv., c. 65.

be so unwarrantable, and so opposed to Catholic usage, that it could only arise from erroneous views about the Blessed Sacrament.

We must, therefore, hold that, after the consecration, the qualities of the bread remain as external realities. It will not do to say that it is only our senses which continue—God so willing—to be affected just as if the bread were still there. Neither is it sufficient to say that the Almighty power of God continues to excite in the air, or the ether, the same vibrations which were set in motion by the bread as long as it was there. Almighty God could certainly do all this. But the peremptory proof that this does not happen in the Holy Eucharist is, that, if that were all, there would be no sacrament. The sacrament of the Eucharist lies in the consecrated species. Our Lord's Body is contained by them; but it is not that sacred Body in, and by, itself that is the sacrament. For a sacrament is an "outward sign"; that is, it is something which is part of the world apprehended by sense. The species, therefore, which contain or present to sense that Body which in itself is (in the Holy Eucharist) outside of and beyond all sensitive cognition, must be external and real. It would be impossible to understand how there could be a sacrament if the vehicle of the sacrament (so to speak) were only an excitation of the sense-nerve, or a motion of air-waves, seemingly produced by an external object, but really not so produced at all. It may be objected that after all, the bread, which seems to produce them, is not there, and therefore there can be no reality producing them. But that is just the point. The substance of bread is no longer there; but what we hold is that the real qualities "remain". This too is, no doubt, miraculous—a transcendent miracle. But we are not here concerned to diminish the number of miracles. We have to save the reality of the sacrament. Thus, as St. Thomas says,¹ "The species which appear in the

¹*Opusc. contra Graecos*, Cap. viii.

sacrament are not only in the fancy or imagination (*phantasia*) of the beholders, as usually happens in the illusions (*præstigiis*) of the magical art—for any fiction would be unworthy of the sacrament of truth". The words read in the Office of Corpus Christi express the Catholic view: "The accidents subsist (in the Holy Eucharist) without a subject, so that the senses take note of these accidents which are their proper objects, and are thus rendered immune from deception".¹

It must be repeated that although the doctrine of the Real Presence requires, as we have said, that the species, qualities or accidents which survive the conversion must be more than forms of the mind or affections of the sensitive apparatus, yet that doctrine does not require that we should hold any special theory of sense-operation. What we must maintain may be thus expressed: Material substance is objective and not merely subjective; material substance has certain means of impressing the human sense; in the Eucharistic conversion the impression-force of the substance of bread remains just as it was after the bread has ceased to be. The only opponents, therefore, that the Catholic doctrine has amongst physicists are those who deny either that material substance is an objective reality or that its impression-force is an objective reality. It is in this sense that the "accidents" must be said to persist. And persisting thus, they continue to play the same part in the physical universe as they, or the elements to which they belong, would have played had there been no Eucharistic conversion. They impress the senses as before. They affect other material substances just as if the bread or the wine were still there. They are themselves subject to physical alteration from their surroundings; and if such alteration goes so far as to destroy them, or to leave them no longer such as bread or wine naturally possesses and demands, the

¹ From the lessons of the second Nocturn.

Eucharistic presence itself ceases to be there beneath them.

It will thus be seen how truly and philosophically Catholics speak when they say of a consecrated Host that "It" is the Body of our Lord. It is the "accidents" or sensible qualities of a material substance that ultimately determine the human intelligence to call it "this" or "that". But in the Eucharist the Body of our Lord, by the wonderful and unique way in which it has taken the place of the substance of the bread, has adopted for outward purposes the bread's qualities. This makes it possible to say with truth that that Host *is* the Lord's Body, and justifies the worshippers in adoring. This also, as we have seen, makes it possible to assert that our Blessed Lord in the Eucharist is moved from place to place, when, literally speaking, only the species are moved; because He is really contained therein. Thus also we are justified in saying that He is touched, seen, broken, eaten, etc. Under these and similar aspects the species have been assumed by our Lord expressly to signify His beneficent purpose in the Eucharistic dispensation. But if we were to say that the Lord's Body was smooth, or white or round, or fragrant, because the Host possessed these qualities, we should be at variance with Catholic feeling, because it is not in these respects that the species are intended to serve as the means of making the sacred Body capable of being dealt with by the senses and faculties of men.

The "accidents" or qualities of the bread and wine, therefore, remain "solid," as Billuart expresses, without a subject to inhere in, by Divine power. But it is St. Thomas's teaching, and that of the school of Catholic doctors, that if we compare accident with accident, there is only one accident that is thus miraculously sustained, *viz.*, dimensive quantity, and that the other accidents, such as colour, taste, etc., are not purely without subject, but subsist in and inhere in, the dimensive quantity. This, to me, is a most pregnant and evidently true

opinion. Whatever philosophy one follows, if we admit external matter, we in that very admission assert that the root quality which affects our sentient powers and makes us accept such reality, is dimension. In other words, we affirm external substance because we are impressed by length, breadth and thickness. It is this triple dimension which, far more than any colour, taste or smell, enables us to be sure that there is something outside of ourselves. Indeed, dimension is so intimately bound up with the idea of material substance itself that our unassisted reason would never have enabled us to discover that it is separable from substance. At the same time, when we reason the thing out, there is no valid proof that the two are inseparable. There is no contradiction of a fatal kind in our saying that material substance, although it cannot possibly part with that element in it which naturally blossoms out in the triple dimension, yet supernaturally may be without *actual* dimension; and that actual dimension, therefore, may supernaturally last on when the substance whence it sprung has ceased to be.

But if the triple dimension is the only "accident" which is thus miraculously sustained, we have really no further difficulty about the accidents. It is true, of course, in this view, to say of the accidents, as a body or cumulatively, that they subsist without a subject; but, comparing them one with another, we say that all the other accidents inhere in the dimensions. This seems to me to make it much more easy to see, on modern theories of molecular physics, how the colour, taste, etc., of the elements can remain in the Holy Eucharist. There can be little doubt that colour, for example, is an effect produced by molecular motion—by the rapidity and depth of light-waves. As long as we hold that there is, in the dimensive quantity of the bread, a true, real and non-subjective cause and origin of the colour-sensation which it causes in us, there is no reason why we should not accept any reasonable molecular theory.

It is hardly necessary to notice the common non-Catholic objection, that the Catholic teaching on the Holy Eucharist amounts to the assertion that Almighty God practises a deception upon man. That teaching upholds two things, first that the substance of the bread and wine is not there, and secondly that the "accidents" or species are there. As to the first, the revelation itself excludes deception, in any real sense of the word. One is not deceived when the word of God plainly declares that a thing is other than it appears. Deception would only occur were the Divine word to declare what was impossible. It is a well-known objection to all miraculous intervention or revelation that when a thing is affirmed to you by your senses and by the laws of nature, there is no testimony of any kind that can validly assure you of the contrary. But no believer in God will admit that the laws of nature are absolutely inviolable, or that the testimony of the senses cannot be arrested by evidence of a higher kind. Nature is the creation and ordinance of God. What He has set in motion He can interrupt; and the human mind has the means of ascertaining such interruption. We behold the uniformity of a natural law, and do not as a rule, hesitate to confide in it. But we have also the knowledge of God. We know that if there is a God, He has the power to interrupt natural law; and we also know that there is in God's keeping a higher dispensation than nature, a dispensation of spiritual ends and means, which is ruled by laws of a much more august character than those of nature; laws of the spirit, of the Kingdom of God, of life everlasting, which ought to overrule, and which do overrule, equally the courses of the stars, the sequence of earthly change, and the laws of life and death. We know this, as surely as we know what our eyes and our ears tell us of the natural world. If, then, we have this previous, solid conviction that there is an order of higher nature—of the supernatural, if you please—which may be ex-

pected, at times, to supersede lower nature's laws, then, in those cases where we see an indication that those lower laws have been temporarily superseded, we do not peremptorily turn our backs, and say it is impossible. We say, on the contrary, "it is very possible; let me calmly examine the evidence". This is an attitude which every consistent Theist is bound to take up. But the usual Protestant objection about "deception" in the Catholic doctrine of the Holy Eucharist really amounts to denying that God can ever be really known to work a miracle. They say, "my senses tell me it is bread". We say, your senses—that is your sensible experience—would have proved to you that our Lord's risen body was a phantom. In neither case is it a question for sensible experience alone; the truth must be reached by the mind, by the intelligence, duly instructed, and aided by faith, working upon the *data* of the senses.

But I grant that it would be a deception if some external reality did not remain. For Christ's words, although they plainly and without chance of misconception, state that the bread is no longer there, by no means say that, in a certain sense, *that which* we see and feel is no longer there. And we maintain that, truly and really, the sense-exciting "qualities" are there. Conceivably, our Lord might have used words which would have warranted us in believing that what was left after the words of consecration was only an illusion of the sense, a phantom of the brain. But He has not done so. On the contrary, unless we hold to something really external, it is impossible to see how His recorded words, taken as a whole, are true.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST AS A SACRAMENT.

THAT the Holy Eucharist is one of the sacraments of the New Law is not denied even by the extreme Protestants. It is true that they do not most of them attach any very definite signification to the word Sacrament. But they all look upon the Eucharist as a holy rite, instituted by Christ, which in some ways promotes the spiritual life.

According to the teaching of the Catholic Church, the essential elements of a sacrament of the New Law are three, *viz.*, that it be an external rite significative of a spiritual effect, that it instrumentally at least effect something spiritual, or in other words convey grace, and that it be instituted or ordained by Christ. In the New Testament the word *sacramentum* is represented by *μυστήριον*; and nowhere is it found in the exact technical sense in which it is used in our modern catechisms. In post-classical Latin, and in many passages of the Fathers, the word is employed in a wide sense, and means almost the same thing as a mystery, or perhaps more accurately, a significant rite or act with a certain divine or religious sanction.¹ It was

¹ Thus St. Ambrose calls the passage of the Red Sea "a Sacrament" (*De Sacr.*, lib. 1, c. 4). St. Cyprian sees a "Sacrament" in certain fixed hours for prayer (*De Orat. Domin.*, n. 34), and St. Augustine uses the word with reference to outward worship. But St. Augustine also speaks of the "Sacraments" as flowing from the wounds of Christ, and as effecting the "initiation" of believers—*inde Sacramenta*

only in the days of the earlier scholastics that the term was narrowed to the strict meaning given above; and certainly as early as the beginning of the twelfth century we have the Seven Sacraments enumerated as they are now. If we do not find this definite enumeration earlier, it is not because the individual rites, such as Baptism, Confirmation, etc., were not believed and held to be what I have stated a Sacrament to be, but simply because such formal enumerations are not to be looked for until formal treatises begin to be written and theology becomes scientific.

It is easy, then, to see that the Holy Eucharist is a sacrament in the fullest and most strict sense of the word. It is a sign; it signifies a spiritual refection or refreshment of the soul; in other words, Divine Grace. It carries grace with it, being intended to cause grace in the soul; as our Lord says, "He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me".¹ And it is ordained by Christ, "Do ye this in My memory".

But we must here carefully note that the Holy Eucharist is peculiar among the Sacraments. In all the other Sacraments, the Sacrament is only verified in the act of being conferred. For example, it is not the water and words of Baptism that constitute the Sacrament of Baptism, but the actual application of them to a suitable subject. With the Holy Eucharist it is different. After the words of consecration have been pronounced it remains a constituted and permanent sacrament, whether there be a recipient or not. It is true, there is sometimes a certain looseness of expression on this subject. The Catechism of the Council says: "Pastors must carefully observe that in this

manarunt, quibus credentes initiantur, (*De Civ. Dei*, xv., cap. 26) The specialised meaning of Sacrament, as meaning a "sacred thing giving grace," became by degrees the only one recognised in Catholic theology. Calvin, and others of the Reformers, tried to go back to the classical sense, of a military "oath" or promise.

¹ John vi.

mystery there is more than one thing to which the name of Sacrament is sometimes applied by sacred writers. Sometimes both the consecration and the reception are so called; frequently both the Body of our Lord and His Blood which are contained in the Sacrament are given this appellation; for St. Augustine says that this 'Sacramentum' consists of two things, the visible appearance of the elements, and the invisible Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. And thus we assert that this Sacrament is to be adored—meaning the Body and Blood of our Lord. But in all these senses it is clear that the word Sacrament is used improperly. In the true and absolute sense, it is the species of the Bread and Wine that are the Sacrament."¹

The Sacrament proper, then, lies in the species of the Bread and Wine, not by and in themselves, but as consecrated; that is, as containing by virtue of the words of consecration the Body and Blood of Christ. The "form," therefore, of the Holy Eucharist is the consecration, in its moral permanence. Once uttered, those words of power remain in their efficacy, entering into the very being of the Sacrament, and determining the species to their sacramental being and condition. Unless the words of consecration have been uttered, and unless we know them to have been uttered, the species have no meaning for us; that is, no sacramental meaning; they do not mean Christ's presence, and the presence of His grace, ready for the use of the worthy recipient. And the species themselves are the matter of the Sacrament—the proximate matter, as distinguished from the remote matter, which is the bread and the wine. The species, although as qualities, they do not belong in the usual sense to the Body of Christ, yet are there to contain that Body and to stand for it.

At the same time, nothing here stated makes it in

¹ Part 2, ch. 8.

any way erroneous to say that the Holy Eucharist is the Body of Christ. For it is evident that when the Fathers use this phrase, as they so constantly do, and when it is heard in the mouths of the faithful, the idea in their minds is, not so much the Sacrament as such—that is, the significative sign—as the thing which is the actual fount and source of the sacramental grace. Moreover, although you cannot certainly say that the species are the Body of Christ, or that the latter is the species, still the object which you are able to point out and to handle by means of the species and in no other way, is the Body of Christ. You can say of the consecrated Host, “This is the Body of Christ”.

The Holy Eucharist, then, is a Sacrament which has a definite and permanent subsisting reality as soon as the words of consecration are pronounced, as long as the species subsist. It need not be said that the Catholic faith, on this point, is rejected by the greater number of non-Catholics. The Lutheran and Calvinistic teaching was that the Holy Eucharist was a sacrament only when administered—only in the “use” thereof, as they phrased it. They did not, and do not, agree in what they mean by use. It would appear that Martin Bucer was the first to suggest to Luther that this might be a way of coming to an agreement with the Zwinglians. The Lutherans took it up—though, apparently, without any conciliatory result as far as Zwingli was concerned. Calvin adopted the idea completely. But some of the party, in order to escape from the too plain passages of the Fathers, in which the Real Presence is asserted to take place and to remain altogether irrespectively of any future reception—modified the view of Bucer and Calvin by asserting that the Presence remained, not only in the act of communion, but during the whole time of the administration of the Supper, or when carried from the Table to the sick—or even for three or four days. The modern Anglicans display all these varieties of error. The Low Churchman believes that

the only sacramental effect is produced by the faith of the recipient. Those with higher views, who have read the Fathers, the scholastics and the Anglican divines, and have become thoroughly muddled with the vast extent of the Eucharistic literature and with innumerable views, theories and explanations, have laid down, like Bishop Gore, that "the Presence is not physically attached to the elements, but is secure only in proportion as we abide under the shelter of the purpose for which it was given . . . that it is a presence for faith in such sense that it may be said only to exist in relation to faith".¹ And in another passage he says that devotion to the Sacrament apart from Communion, as practised in the modern Roman Church "cannot but raise in many minds the question whether, where the purpose of the sacramental presence is so vitally changed, we have the right to feel secure of the permanence of the presence itself".²

It need not be said that if there is such a thing as the change of bread into the Body of Christ, the plain and obvious inference is, that that sacred Body, with all its concomitants, remains as long as the species remain. For the Presence, of whatever sort it may be, has no conditions attached to it except the utterance of the words of consecration. Even when the wicked receive, there is no sign that that Presence is withdrawn; on the contrary, St. Paul says that the unworthy receiver "eateth and drinketh judgment" for the precise reason that he does not "discern," that is, distinguish as it should be distinguished, the Body of the Lord, and "is guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord". To quote the testimonies of the Fathers would be to repeat those passages in which they assert the Real Presence, for there is no hint in any of them that such Presence is other than permanent. We may, however, cite this very pertinent testimony of St. Cyril of

¹ *The Body of Christ*, p. 154.

² *Ibid.*, p. 139.

Alexandria: "I hear there are others who assert that the mystical Benediction" (*εὐλογία*—a name for the Holy Eucharist) "profiteth nothing unto sanctification if a portion of it become left over to another day; but those who thus maintain are foolish; for Christ is not changed, nor is His sacred Body altered; but the efficacy of the benediction" (consecration) "and the power and the life-giving grace remain in Him all the time".¹ In accordance with this Patristic teaching, the Council of Trent decrees: "If any one saith that after the Consecration is completed, the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are not in the admirable Sacrament of the Eucharist, but (are there) only during the use, whilst it is being taken, and not either before or after; and that in the hosts or consecrated particles which are reserved or which remain after Communion, the true Body of the Lord remaineth not, let him be anathema".²

The tentative and hesitating statements of Bishop Gore contain no argument. It is true, as the Council of Trent states, that the Blessed Sacrament was instituted in order to be received. But if it is really the Body of Christ, it is adorable and to be adored. Whether it ought to be reserved, and exposed for adoration and devotion, is a question which it is for the Church to decide; and her practice, as we shall see later on, has varied. But there cannot be a shadow of doubt that it has always been reserved for the sick, sometimes for a longer, sometimes for a shorter time. As time went on—as new heresies arose, and new developments of faith and practice discovered themselves, it was natural that denials of the Real Presence should be met by more strenuous and earnest assertion of that great dogma on the part of Catholics; and nothing could be more fitting, more in conformity with the ancient and primitive teaching, or better adapted to assert and proclaim the truth, than

¹ Migne, P. G., "Op. S. Cyrilli," tom. ix., p. 175.

² Sess. xiii., Can. 4.

the great mediæval outburst of piety and worship, when great Saints wrote, great churches were built, and a triumphant festival established, in honour of the Real Objective Presence.

Bishop Gore's theories, apart from the uncertainty they involve as to the duration of the Presence, seem to explain away the very Presence itself into something subjective. It is true he uses the phrase "objective Presence". But just as in his Essay on Inspiration he seems to make each man's own reason the measure of the extent and depth of the inspired message,¹ so he would appear to hold a view of objectivity which would make the Incarnation itself impossible. He says—"Things have no existence apart from the mind that knows them, for it is only as held together by the mind of the observer that all the sensations of colour, taste, hardness, softness, shape, etc., coalesce into an object held together in relation to the whole orderly world".² Applying this theory to the Holy Eucharist, he says that we are to suppose "that though it is God Who makes the bread to be the Body of Christ, and not man . . . yet He makes this spiritual reality to exist relatively not absolutely ; in such sense as to exist only for faith, the faith of the believing and worshipping Church."³ It would certainly seem to follow from this that when there is not faith, the Presence is not there, or ceases. But a Presence which comes and goes with Faith is not a Presence that is within the sphere of the sensible and the external. No Christian could ever be sure that he was in presence of the Body of Christ. No Sacrament or Sacrifice, no supper or communion, could be constituted or practised on the authority of a dogma so elusive. Neither is it of any avail to reply that the faith here spoken of is not the faith of the individual, but the faith of the Church. The faith of the Church

¹ *Lux Mundi*, "The Holy Spirit and Inspiration".

² *The Body of Christ*, p. 151.

³ *Ibid.*

never fails. But, according to Bishop Gore's view, it would seem that the faith of the "Roman" branch of the Church, as regards the reservation and adoration of the Holy Eucharist has failed; for he suggests that her mistaken practice in these points may have resulted in the withdrawal of the Gift. If this can be so, where, in all the world, is the Real Presence? Not, certainly, among the Nonconformists, or the Anglicans as a body; the majority of these frankly profess that they do not believe in it. In order, therefore, to find in its exercise and power that great Sacrament of His love which our Lord left to the Church, we are to apply to the narrow sect, represented by Bishop Gore, who profess to believe in a Real Presence, but will not honour it as such; who theorise, and suggest, and surmise and criticise, each one differing from the other, unable to explain Holy Scripture, at a loss to harmonise the Fathers, and utterly at variance with the vast majority of the Christians of the world. How far, on Dr. Gore's theories, that sacred Presence is real—that is external, objective—even when Faith exists, is a further question which would be too long to treat here; but it would be interesting to know whether he would consider even the Body which was born of the Blessed Virgin, which suffered and rose again, which sitteth at the right hand of God the Father, to be constituted by the mind's apprehension of relations. For a theory of cognition which makes the mind the source of the qualities apprehended—and this seems to be Dr. Gore's—would appear to dissolve external reality into a psychical state or condition.

A few remarks may here be made upon the remote matter of the Holy Eucharist, *viz.*, the bread. In the Latin Church it must be unleavened, or unfermented. But the Sacrament would be validly, although disobediently, consecrated even if the bread were fermented; for this circumstance is only a precept of the Church, and not a divine ordinance. But it is almost certain that our Lord used unfermented bread. Perhaps some

of my readers may have heard Anglicans protesting against what is called "wafer" bread—the thin small hosts now in use in the Western Church. Certainly in the early ages the bread of the Eucharist was more like what we know as a loaf. It was consecrated in bulk, and broken up for Communion. But no one can deny that the "wafer" bread is bread, in the common acceptance of the term; that is, it is flour, tempered with water and baked. This is what men call bread. Whatever chemical or empyreumatic differences there are between wafer bread and loaf bread, it is only pedantry and stupidity that can deny the former to be bread. The division into small hosts is an obvious convenience; it saves the need of breaking—an operation always attended with the danger of irreverence. But the introduction of the "wafer" bread has been very gradual. We see, from the representations in the Roman catacombs, that in the first three centuries the hosts were large and thick, with an indented cross, to facilitate breaking. As early as the eleventh century, the custom had been introduced of having a larger host for the celebrant and smaller ones for the communicants. In the thirteenth century we find St. Raymund de Pennafort, the celebrated Dominican theologian, in his *Summula*, giving directions for the making of the smaller hosts; they are to be of wheaten flour, white, thin, small, round, unleavened, and without salt; and if they are too thick, or broken, or uneven, or discoloured, or spotted, or have been dropped upon the ground, they are to be rejected. The present Roman size is, for the large hosts, nine centimètres in diameter (about three and a half inches), for the small ones, four centimètres (about one and a half inches). In all ages the hosts for the Altar have been made with the greatest care and reverence. Palladius states¹ that he had seen Candida, the wife of Trajan, a Roman

¹ *Hist. Lausiaca*, c. cxlv.

general, labouring all the night long in shaping and baking the bread of the Oblation. Saintly princes like St. Radegunda and St. Wenceslaus would themselves grind the corn and make the altar-bread. In cathedrals and monasteries, priests and deacons, in sacred garb and with prayer, performed the holy task, and in these days religious are employed in it all over the world. It is interesting to recall that in 1865 Pope Pius IX. gave permission to the priests exiled to Siberia to use for the Mass bread of any shape or form.

The Wine of the Eucharist must be wine of the grape. There have been heretical bodies who have refused to use wine, even in the Eucharist. Some, like the Encratitæ, disciples of Tatian, held wine to be the gall of dragons; others, as the Manichæans, considered it the masterpiece of the Evil One; others again, like the Ebionites, rejected it on grounds of temperance; whilst sometimes we find ignorant Catholics persuading themselves that in using water instead of wine in the Eucharist they were performing a praiseworthy act of mortification. St. Cyprian had to expostulate strongly with certain timid Christians, who, during the persecution, fearing that the smell of wine would betray them, substituted water in the Holy Sacrifice. Cardinal Pitra¹ even cites a Greek canon ordering the deposition of a Bishop who used beer; and from a canon of a Council of Winchester, in 1076, it would appear that such a thing was not at that time absolutely unknown in this country. I need not say that some modern Protestants have advocated the use of water in the Eucharist, on temperance principles, and some of unfermented grape juice (which, at least if recent, is valid matter, though unlawful). The Catholic Church has uniformly insisted that the only valid matter of the consecration of the Chalice is true wine of the grape. But she has always mingled with the wine a minute quantity of water. This practice is

¹ *Juris. Eccles. Græc.*, t. i., p. 13.

mentioned by Justin Martyr, in the second century, and it seems certain that it existed from the beginning. It arose probably from what occurred at the Last Supper; for it was the prescribed usage to add a few drops of water to the Chalice of Benediction, after the supper—and this was the cup our Lord consecrated. The Fathers and ecclesiastical writers see, in this ceremony, various symbolical meanings, such as the union of Christ with His people, the union of the Divine and human nature, etc. In the Anglican Church at the present moment there is much controversy over the “mixed chalice” as it is called—some desiring to reintroduce it, after the example of all antiquity, others retorting that it is not ordered by the Book of Common Prayer. I believe the judgment in the Lincoln case was that water could be added, provided it was done in the vestry or extra-liturgically.

The form of the Holy Eucharist consists in the words “This is My Body,” “This is the Chalice of My Blood”. These words, which are uttered by the priest not only historically but as the minister of Christ, do or effect what they express; they so “alter” the bread and wine that they are converted into the Body and Blood of Christ. It will be observed that the form, in the instance of this greatest of all the Sacraments, has a far more powerful and august effect than in any of the others. In the others it defines, narrows, specialises, a rite or act; but in the Eucharistic consecration, it effects the change of one substance into another.

There are several interesting theological questions connected with the Form of the Holy Eucharist. The first regards a point in which the modern Greek (schismatical) Church is at variance with ourselves. They contend that, besides the words which are found in the history of the institution, and which the celebrant utters in the person of Christ, there is required for the validity of consecration certain words of “invocation” in which the Holy Spirit is called upon to descend upon the

elements and effect the change. This is called the ἐπίκλησις. As an example, we may cite the passage of St. Cyril of Jerusalem.¹ After describing the *Sursum Corda*, Preface, and *Sanctus*, he proceeds: "Then after hallowing ourselves by these spiritual hymns we beseech the merciful God to send forth His Holy Spirit upon the elements lying upon the table (τὰ προκείμενα), to make the Bread the Body of Christ and the Wine the Blood of Christ. For most certainly whatever the Holy Spirit may have touched, that is hallowed and transformed (ἡγιάσται καὶ μεταβέβληται). Then, after the spiritual sacrifice, the unbloody service (λατρεία), is completed, over that sacrifice of propitiation we beseech God for the common peace of the Churches," etc. An invocation of this kind is thus given in the ancient Liturgy of St. Mark: "Send forth . . . Thy Holy Spirit upon us, and upon these loaves and upon these cups, that He may sanctify and consecrate (τελειώσῃ) them as God Almighty; and may make the Bread the Body and the Cup the Blood of the New Covenant, of the very Lord and God and Saviour, our Almighty King Jesus Christ".² Professor Cheetham states³ that an Epiclesis is universal in Oriental Liturgies, and common in Liturgies influenced by the East, as the Mozarabic, whilst in Liturgies of the Roman type it is altogether wanting. This is the common opinion of liturgical writers. Le Brun, in a long dissertation, tries to prove that the Epiclesis was primitive and universal. Its alleged absence from the Roman Mass has been seized upon by some hostile critics as a proof of the divergence of Rome from ancient usage. But even if the Roman rite had dropped this invocation of the Holy Spirit, there is no proof that it was ever considered essential to the consecration. Its employment is evidently an instance—perhaps the most striking instance—of a

¹ *Catech. Myst.*, v.

² C. 17.

³ Smith's *Dict. Christian Antiquities*, Art. "Epiclesis".

very common liturgical usage, *viz.* the prayer that God would "confirm" what He is already believed to have substantially done. Thus, in the ancient rite of Ordination, after the imposition of hands has taken place, the Bishop prays that Almighty God would "give unto these His servants the dignity of the Priesthood"; and in the ritual of several of the sacraments we pray, after the sacrament has been conferred that God would "confirm what He hath wrought within us". And it can hardly be doubted that, in the Roman Mass the prayer *Supra quæ propitio* is the Epiclesis. In that prayer, God is asked to "accept" the Sacrifice, and to cause it to be carried by Jesus Christ Himself to the heavenly altar that all who share in it may be filled with blessing and grace. This is an adequate equivalent to the Greek form. Both pray that what is about to be done, or has been done, by the priest may be confirmed in heaven. The great act may already be accomplished, but for our own spiritual profit it is well that we should both acknowledge whose power it is that has wrought it, and in whose mercy it lies that we should profit by it.¹

It may next be asked whether all the words of the Institution are necessary for the valid consecration?

The decree of the (undivided) Council of Florence recites that "the Form of this Sacrament are the words of our Saviour by which He makes (*conficit*) the Sacrament; for the priest makes this Sacrament speaking in the Person of Christ".² These words indicate the view which the Church has always taken of the form of Consecration. In all the Sacraments the form is no idle or aimless phrase, but an expression of what is to be effected. Whether it be a washing, an absolution, or an anointing, the Sacramental words indicate what is intended to be done. The Sacramental rite may be long or short; but the actual effecting of the

¹ See Franzelin, *De SS. Eucharistiâ*, *Thes.* vii. Duchesne, *Origines*, p. 181. Dom Cabrol, *Les Origines Liturgiques*, App. 1, p. 367, n.

² *Decr. pro Armenis.*, Denzinger, *Enchir.*, n. 593, 606.

Sacrament leaves out history, exhortation and amplification, and concentrates itself on the definite and rapidly performed sign of Divine grace. The words our Lord used, which the consecrating priest uses in His person are "This is My Body," and "This is My Blood". The brief historical introduction, as it stands in the Liturgy, "*Qui pridie quam pateretur*," etc., is obviously only historical; because it is clear that such words were never used by our Lord Himself at the Institution. The same may be said of the words which precede the consecration of the Chalice, "*Simili modo*," etc. The opinion that these words are needful for the validity of the consecration might be said to be unheard of in the Church, were it not that Scotus maintained that it is by them that the priest puts on the person of Christ, without which putting on or assumption the consecrating act cannot be effected. But such assumption of the Person of Christ is implicitly contained in the intention to consecrate—that is, to do what Christ did and commanded to be done. No Catholic theologian, as far as I know, has followed Scotus in this opinion.

There is a special difficulty, however, in regard to the words which followed the form of the consecration of the Chalice; *viz.*, "*novi et æterni testamenti; mysterium fidei; qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum*". These words are placed in the mouth of our Lord; they are narrative, and not exhortation. They are what may be called "determinations of the predicate". The question is whether the words cited are necessary for a due determination or definition of the expression "This is My Blood". On this I remark, first, that the declarative words referred to are wanting in many of the Eastern Liturgies—Liturgies whose value and correctness cannot be called in question. It might be maintained that the determination of the form was, either wholly or in part, left to the decision of the Church. It is certain that the

Roman form does not give all the words used by our Lord. Both St. Paul and St. Luke, in their narratives of the Institution, add a qualificative phrase to the words "My Body," *viz.*, "which is given for you"—"which is broken for you". There can be no sound reason apart from the Church's decision why it is valid to omit these words, and invalid to omit those we are considering. But if we accept the principle that the consecration is effected by the words which signify the conversion of the elements into the Body or the Blood of Christ, it is clear that the only necessary words are "This is My Body," "This is My Blood," or their equivalents. As St. Thomas says, "The words, This is the Chalice of My Blood, signify precisely the conversion of the wine into the Blood, as has been said when speaking of the consecration of the Bread. The words that come after signify the power and efficacy of that Blood, poured out in the Passion and operating in this Sacrament."¹

In spite of this and other passages of St. Thomas, it is maintained by some of his followers that his real opinion is that all the words in the Roman Missal which follow the "*Calix sanguinis mei*" down to "*Hoc facite*" exclusively, are of the essence of the Form. And it must be confessed that there are at least two passages in his writings which seem to favour this view.² But it appears to me that Billuart successfully explains these texts, and shows that St. Thomas in using the words "essential," and "necessary" is rather speaking of the practical obligation of the minister to use the complete form, as laid down by the Church, than deciding the theological question as to the validity of a portion of that Form.

It will be observed that we are not here treating of the practical question, whether it can ever be right to

¹ III. q. 78, a. 1.

² *In magist. Sent.*, iv., d. 3, q. 2, a. 2, q. 1, and in 1 Cor. xi. Lect. 6.

omit any of the words of the Roman missal, or what is to be done when there has been such omission. Following the canon of Moral Theology that in a question of the validity of a Sacrament the *tutior pars* is always to be taken, and complying with the spirit of the rubric of the Missal, we must certainly hold that whenever any of the words given in larger characters in the Canon have been left out so as to alter the sense or leave it really incomplete, the consecration must be performed afresh, beginning from the words "Qui pridie".¹

¹ Cf. De Lugo, *De Euch.*, iii., Cap. 15, no. 15, who cites Natalis Alexander.

CHAPTER VI.

THE USE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST AS A SACRAMENT.

WE find from the very earliest times that Christian teachers contrast, in the most emphatic manner, the mere material or physical reception of the Holy Eucharist with its full and complete sacramental reception. The universal prevalence of this manner of speaking is a convincing proof of the universal belief in the Real Presence. The sinner, although he received no spiritual benefit, received, materially, something so holy in itself that so to receive it was a sacrilege. Passing over the words of St. Paul, we find that St. Cyprian, St. Ephrem, St. John Chrysostom and many other writers of the first four centuries, dwell with awe and horror upon the outrage offered to our Lord Jesus Christ by those who dare to approach Holy Communion in the state of grievous sin. We find, nevertheless, in the early middle ages, when the true theological principles ruling the question of the continuance of the Real Presence were not yet clearly understood, that it was a not uncommon opinion that, when the sinner received, the Presence of Jesus, by the ordinance of God, ceased, and such a revolting indignity as the partaking of the sacred Body by a child of the devil was not allowed to take place. But St. Thomas is not afraid to push to its utmost consequences the dogma of the Real Presence.¹

¹ III., qu. 80, art. 3.

To quote his words in the *Lauda Sion* :—

Sumunt boni, sumunt mali
Sorte tamen inæquali
Vitæ vel interitus.

St. Bonaventure says that the opinion referred to leads to erroneous teaching (against the Real Presence), and is clearly against the authority of the Fathers. "Our Lord," he continues, "offers Himself to the just and the unjust, as on the Cross He offers Himself for all."¹ The Eucharistic Presence was like the laws of nature. Whatever inconvenience might occur, the institution of Christ held good as long as the conditions remained which He had prescribed ; that is, as long as the species endured, Catholic faith reflected that the Sacred Body, by its very sacramental state, could never be brought into "local contact" with any material substance. Outrage, in the formal sense of the word, there could be none, except by the deliberate act of a rational agent. As for sinners, it was part of the infinite love of the Saviour of men to will to submit to their sacrilegious participation of His divine banquet rather than exercise a hidden interference which could not have been known to the Church without the danger of throwing doubt or uncertainty on the Real Presence itself.

In the sixteenth century the Reformers invented the view that the Holy Eucharist was the Eucharist only in the act of reception. This opinion which originated with Bucer, was equally convenient for the "symbolist" Zwinglians and the more or less "realist" Lutherans. As we have said, it enabled the former to persist in their denial of a Real Presence without that absolute and flat contradiction of antiquity which the abolition of the Lord's Supper would have forced on the notice of the world. It assisted the Lutherans to get rid of those consequences of a permanent Presence—such as adoration and reservation—which distinguish the practice of the Catholic Church. In the development of Protestant-

¹ IV. *Dist.*, a. 2, qu. 1.

ism the Zwinglian view of the Presence has come to be almost universal, at least in this country, and the eating of the Lord's Supper is not held to be a Sacrament, but only a ceremony expressive of the remembrance of Christ's passion, affording a certain edification to the participant. In the Anglican Prayer-book, the Lord's Supper is called a Sacrament. The Church Catechism asserts that what we receive is bread and wine, and that the bread and wine are "the outward part or sign," of the Lord's Supper; the Body and Blood of Christ are the "inward part" or "thing signified," and are "verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful". Except for the denial of the real bodily Presence, and the corresponding assertion of the continuance of the bread and wine, the language of the Prayer-book in prayers and rubrics resembles the language of the Catholic Church. There is insistence on the outward sign, the inward grace, the necessity of a pure conscience, and the sinfulness of an unworthy communion. It would appear that the generality of Anglicans, at the present day, have a much weaker appreciation of the gravity and sanctity of this ordinance than the men who, with the Catholic formularies before them, originally compiled the Prayer-book. The very idea of grace as a spiritual endowment or gift seems to be extremely rare. Hence it would not be going too far to say that most Anglicans, if we except the extreme High Church, look upon the Sacrament of the Eucharist as nothing more than an edifying commemorative ceremony.

The Church has always claimed the power to refuse participation in the divine mysteries of the Eucharist to those whom she judged unworthy. The sentence of excommunication, although its precise effect has varied at different periods, always excluded from Holy Communion. In the early ages we find local Councils forbidding Communion to certain classes of sinners even at death.¹ But this absolute excommunication from which

¹ See the Canons of the Council of Eliberis (or Elvira), c. A.D. 305.

no absolution could ever be given, was never a universal practice in the Church. Excommunication is seldom pronounced at the present day. But the Roman Ritual forbids the priest to administer the Holy Communion to those whose unworthiness is public and notorious, such as blasphemers, those who live in concubinage, harlots, usurers, and dealers in magic. No formal sentence of the Church authorities is required in cases like these, provided the facts are beyond all doubt notorious.

The divine precept of participation in the Eucharist¹ is binding upon all who are capable of "discerning," that is, sufficiently distinguishing, that sacred Food. Hence children before the use of reason, and idiots, are not bound to receive, and the Church does not permit them to approach the Holy Table.

But with regard to children, it is well known that the usage of the early Church differed from that of our own days. Up to about the twelfth century it was the custom to give the Holy Communion to young children. Sometimes a few drops of the consecrated wine were placed within their lips. It was an interesting and touching custom, of which we read in Hugh of St. Victor² and others, to administer the Blessed Sacrament to new-born children by the priest giving them to suck his finger dipped in the species of wine. Sometimes a fragment of the sacred Host was dipped in the Chalice and given to them. As children were rarely, before the eleventh century, baptised until they were a year old, it was possible thus to give them the species of bread.

One reason for thus admitting to Holy Communion infants who could not understand what it was, seems to have been the desire to protect them from the power of the demons. But as we infer from a passage of St. Augustine,³ Holy Communion was also looked upon,

¹ See Chapter viii.

² *De Sacramentis*, lib. i., cap. 10.

³ *De Pecc. Mer.*, lib. i., c. 20.

in conjunction with Baptism, as a formal incorporation into the living Body of Christ, the Church, without which no one could be saved.

The custom of communicating infants began to give way in the eleventh century, and by the thirteenth it had almost completely ceased. In England it was virtually forbidden in the tenth century. We find a Canon bearing the name of King Edgar, and therefore in all probability claiming St. Dunstan (967) as its author, which prescribes that children shall not be admitted to the Holy Eucharist until they can recite by heart the *Credo* and the *Pater Noster*. There was an interesting discussion on this practice at the Council of Trent. Some theologians were in favour of retaining, or reviving it. They said that infants certainly received, by the partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, an increase of sanctifying grace given in their Baptism. The majority, however, denied this, because infants cannot "prove themselves," nor discern the Body of the Lord. Some maintained that, in order to receive Communion, it was necessary to have "the memory of the Passion". As for the early Church, some said it was given to cancel the rite of the Pagans, who gave to infants things sacrificed to idols; or to preserve them from witchcraft and the invasion of the devil, just as it was sometimes given to the dead.¹ But the view that children before the use of reason are incapable of receiving any grace from the administration of the Eucharist, though it has been held by theologians of name, may be said to be now almost given up. The ancient custom of the Church undoubtedly implied that grace was given; and to assert that this was an error is what no Catholic would dare to do, especially after the declaration of the Council of Trent, whose words may here be cited:—

"This Holy Synod teaches that little children who

¹ Pallavicino, *Istoria del Concilio di Trento*, xvii., 6.

have not attained the use of reason are not by any necessity bound to the sacramental Communion of the Eucharist; forasmuch as, having been regenerated by the laver of Baptism and incorporated with Christ, they cannot at that age lose the grace which they have already acquired, of being the sons of God. Not therefore, however, is antiquity to be condemned, if, in some places, it at one time practised that custom; for, on the one hand, those holy Fathers had a probable (*probabilem*) cause for what they did in respect of their own times, and, on the other, we must take it as certain that it was not because they held it to be a necessary means of salvation that they did so.”¹

The Communion of Infants has never been forbidden by any general Canon of the Church. But the Rubric of the Roman Ritual—which indeed has all the force of Canon law—lays down that the Holy Eucharist must not be administered to “those who, on account of their tender age (*propter aetatis imbecillitatem*) have not as yet the knowledge and relish of this Sacrament”.²

The practice of communicating under one kind only is another instance in which the Catholic Church has altered her discipline.

Before considering it, we may observe that there are some superficial reasons for maintaining that the Holy Eucharist is not one Sacrament, but really two. For there are two consecrations; and there are two sacramental objects or signs, the Host and the Chalice.

But to assert this would be entirely to misconceive the essential nature of a Sacrament. It is not the elements of a Sacrament considered merely as so many actions or things, or so many numerically different sayings or doings, that constitute a Sacrament as such; it is the elements, acts, or sayings—and the sum of them—considered as significative. Nearly all the

¹ Sess. xxi., cap. 4.

² *De SS. Euch. Sacr.*

Sacraments are made up of many acts and words. Extreme Unction, for example, is conferred by five or six separate anointings. But the recipient does not receive the Sacrament five or six times; the group of anointings is employed as one general significative anointing. The significative ratio, or essential point, of the Holy Eucharist as a Sacrament is, that our Blessed Lord is given under the species after the manner of food. But in the common occurrence of the partaking of food, or of a meal or banquet, there is both eating and drinking. To eat and drink is the equivalent of "making a meal". It was this humble institution that our Lord so touchingly elevated to the dignity of a Sacrament of the New Law. And as a man who eats and drinks makes one meal, and not two, so in the double species of the Eucharist there is only one Sacrament.

The question, however, whether the Sacrament is verified by reception under one species only, is more intricate, and must be treated somewhat more fully. It is well known that the modern practice of the Catholic Church is, to withhold the Cup from all except the celebrant of the Mass, whether layman or cleric. It is also an indisputable fact that in the early ages of the Church, and, indeed, in the Middle Ages, the laity were given the consecrated Chalice as well as the consecrated Host. The facts, as far as they can be compressed into a short sketch, are as follows.

Let us, to begin with, take the description of the rite of Holy Communion which we find in St. Cyril of Jerusalem († 387). In his time the faithful received the sacred Host into their hands and communicated themselves. "When you approach in order to communicate," he says,¹ "the hands must not be held out extended, with fingers spread; but, supporting with the left the right hand which is to hold so great a King, receive the

¹ *Catech. Myst.*, v.

Body of Christ in the hollow thereof, answering Amen. Then, after sanctifying your eyes with the sight of that holy and venerable Body, partake of it by feeding thereon. Beware of letting any part of it fall to the ground; to lose even a crumb should be to you like the loss of a limb; if one gave you gold, how solicitous would you be to keep it safe. What precautions, therefore, should you take to lose no portion of that which is infinitely more precious than gold or the diamond." There were, as need not be pointed out, many inconveniences attaching to this manner of communicating. It gradually therefore died out. The earliest notice that we find in ecclesiastical monuments of the change of discipline occurs in a Council of Rouen of the ninth century, which forbids the celebrant to place the Holy Eucharist in the hands of any one, male or female, but only in their mouth. It is to be remarked that women were accustomed to cover their hands with a napkin before receiving it; and sometimes, as at Constantinople, they received it in golden or precious vases—but this was never authorised.

The most ancient way of giving the Cup, was to present to the faithful the chalice containing the consecrated species of wine, and to make them drink of it. We find this clearly stated by St. Cyprian († 258); and it is interesting here again to quote St. Cyril of Jerusalem: "After having thus communicated of the Body of Jesus Christ, approach the Chalice of His Blood; stretch not out your hands, but bow down, adore and pay homage, saying Amen. Then sanctify yourself by touching the Blood of Jesus Christ which you are receiving" (that is drink), "and whilst your lips are yet moist, wipe them with your hand and lift it to your eyes, your forehead and your other senses, that it may consecrate them. Finally, waiting for the concluding prayer of the Priest" (the post-communion), "give thanks to God for having made you worthy to participate in mysteries so lofty and so great". It would appear that it was in the sixth

or seventh century that the Precious Blood began to be received in Rome and elsewhere, through a pipe or tube. It is easy to see why this expedient was resorted to. Giving the chalice to scores in a crowded Church must have led to many accidents. It is curious that the only instance in which the use of the tube still continues, is in the solemn Papal Mass, in which the Sovereign Pontiff, although it is not the fact that he communicates seated, consumes the Chalice by means of a golden *calamus*—a reed or pipe. Later still, that is about the tenth and eleventh centuries, another expedient was adopted in order to obviate the inconveniences arising from the giving of the Chalice. This was, to dip the consecrated Host in the consecrated Wine. But the Holy See seems consistently to have set its face against this practice. Nevertheless, it held its footing in Europe even into the fifteenth century. Long before that century, however, in many parts of the Western Church, the only Chalice that was given to lay communicants was a Chalice of unconsecrated wine into which had been poured a few drops of the Precious Blood. When this became common, it was evident that Communion under both species would soon be altogether abolished. The danger, the scandal, the difficulty of getting wine (in the Northern countries) and of keeping it from spoiling—all combined to urge the Holy See to suppress the giving of the Chalice. The following are the exact words of the Council of Constance (1418)—the first pronouncement of the Universal Church on this point of discipline. After reciting how certain persons rashly blamed the Church on these and other accounts, the Council continues: "Wherefore, this present Council . . . declares, decrees and defines, that although Christ instituted this venerable Sacrament after supper, and administered it to His disciples under both species of Bread and Wine, yet, this notwithstanding, the praiseworthy sanction of the sacred Canons and the approved usage of the Church

has been, and is, that this Sacrament must not be celebrated after supper, nor received by non-fasting persons, except in case of infirmity or other necessity. And, in like manner (it decrees) that although in the primitive Church this Sacrament was received by the faithful under both species, nevertheless, to avoid danger and scandal, the custom hath been reasonably introduced, that it be received by the consecrator under both species, and by the laity under the species of Bread alone; since all must believe without doubting that the whole Body and Blood of Christ is truly contained as well under the species of Bread as under that of Wine." This pronouncement is referred to by the Council of Trent, which re-asserts the decree with great emphasis.¹ There was, however, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a noisy, if not widespread, opposition to the suppression of the Chalice. Pope Martin V.—the same Pope who confirmed the decree of the Council of Constance quoted above—did not hesitate, on one solemn occasion at least, to give Communion to certain eminent persons under both species. And the Council of Basle, which followed the Council of Constance, was at first ready to allow it in Bohemia, in order to appease the religious troubles of that country. Even at the Council of Trent, the Cardinal of Lorraine, on the part of the King of France, the Emperor Ferdinand and several other Catholic princes, pressed upon the Holy See and the Council to concede the use of the Chalice. Many of the Bishops thought that it might prove a conciliatory measure, and the Pope, after much consultation, went so far as to allow it in Vienna, and in other places where the Bishops should expressly ask for it. But it was soon perfectly evident that the disturbers of religion were not to be conciliated by this or any other disciplinary concession. It had one good effect; it demonstrated clearly that the cry for the

¹ Sess. xxi., Cap. 1, 2, 3, Can. 1, 2, 3.

Cup was only a pretence, and that the real matter of contention was the faith itself.

With this slight historical sketch in our minds, let us now observe that, from the very beginning, in spite of the prevalent practice of Communion under both kinds, there had always been a clearly expressed conviction that Communion in one kind was enough for the full and complete Sacrament as instituted by our Lord.

I take, first of all, the very ancient practice which is called the Mass of the Presanctified. In the Latin Church on Good Friday, and in the Greek Church on all fasting days, there is no Mass; that is, no consecration proper; but the Sacrament is received under the species of Bread alone. It is true that in the Latin Church at the present day, Communion not being given on Good Friday, the celebrant alone so receives; but in ancient times in the Latin Church, and down to this very day in the Greek Churches, the practice of communicating the people at the Mass of the Presanctified existed and exists, and the Communion was, and is, given with the species of Bread that had been consecrated at a previous Mass. As the Mass of the Presanctified was "ancient" as far back as the sixth century, we have a striking demonstration of what the ancient Church thought of the validity of Communion under one kind.

We may next take the extremely interesting facts connected with home Communion, and with that of the solitaries of the desert. There are numerous facts related in the lives of the early Saints and the history of the Church, showing that the more common practice was for the faithful, when they took the Holy Sacrament to their houses—a privilege that was very soon abolished—to take the species of Bread alone. St. Basil (fourth century) uses the word *μερίδα* (*particulam*) to denote this reservation—a term he could never have applied to the two species. In that interesting collection of stories, the *Spiritual Meadow* of Moschus, we see that the Blessed Sacrament is carried on a journey

wrapped in linen cloth.¹ And we read of many Communion in the desert where the species of wine is entirely wanting.

As for the Communion of the sick, although it was undoubtedly in early times the use to give it to them in both kinds, yet we find that, in cases of need, it was given sometimes under the species of Bread, sometimes under that of Wine, only. There is a well-known example in the life of St. Ambrose. And in Venerable Bede's great History, we have the touching story of the boy at Selsea Abbey (seventh century) who died the last victim of the epidemic sickness that his merits put an end to, and received, in his dying hour, what Bede calls a *particula dominicæ oblationis*, a particle (μερίς) of the Host from the altar.

In the case of infants, we find that it was given to them sometimes under the species of Wine only. This was also extended to the sick who could with difficulty swallow.

These facts are admitted by the greater number of Protestant writers. There is one other which seems to throw much light on the practice of the fourth century. In the time of Pope St. Leo the Great, it was discovered that a certain number of communicants had been for a considerable time abstainers from the Cup, because they thought that wine was the work of the Devil—(they were, in fact, Manichæans). A strict order was given that all should partake of the Chalice. What this anecdote seems to show is, that there cannot have been, at that period, any very careful insistence on the Communion of the Chalice. It would have been impossible that the authorities should not have known of it, and that, if it had not been to some extent optional, they should have allowed it to pass. Communion under a single species seems, therefore, to have been permitted in the fourth century, in principle, and was only forbidden

¹ Ch. lxxix.

in order to detect unbelief and heresy. I may add to this a much more modern incident. Badger, in his well-known work on the Nestorians of Coordistan, relates that, when Communion was given, a good many received under the species of Bread only. As a good Anglican, he expressed his astonishment. Then they informed him that the partaking of the Chalice was not considered necessary, but optional, the Sacrament being perfectly complete without it. It must be remembered that these Nestorians have been separated from the Catholic Church since the seventh century.¹

From these facts we argue that from the earliest times the Church held that reception under one kind was sufficient for the Sacrament. It is useless for our opponents to say that the Church only allowed this in cases of necessity. She could not have allowed it at all, as a sacramental reception, had she not held it to be the Sacrament. She has never allowed the Sacrament to be celebrated, for example, with any other liquid than wine, although in many circumstances wine has been practically impossible to procure. Communion under both kinds, therefore, is evidently, in the eyes of the primitive Church, a question of discipline. The same power which could forgo it in scattered cases could abolish it altogether for the laity.

If we leave history and come to consider the nature of the Holy Eucharist itself, it would seem most unreasonable to doubt that the Sacrament can be wholly complete under one kind as under both—unless we deny the real objective Presence. As a fact, the opponents of the one have generally been opponents of the other. It is easy to understand that those who see, in the Holy Eucharist, a mere commemorative partaking of bread and wine should maintain that the spiritual significance,

¹ *Nestorians and their Rituals*, vol. ii., p. 175. Mr. Badger adds that the Nestorians must have "learned this error from the Roman missionaries". Their ritual, he says, prescribes Communion in both kinds.

or whatever it is that they see in that rite, requires the double object. Undoubtedly our Lord so instituted it. And it is to be carefully observed that the Catholic Church, so far from omitting the Cup altogether, insists now, as always, upon the double consecration and the double reception by the sacrificing Priest. But the complete Eucharistic rite, and the Eucharistic Sacrament, are two different things. The one is the Sacrifice of the Mass, which includes Communion. The other is the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood. It is hardly worth while arguing for Communion under one kind with those who deny the objective Presence, and the unbloody Christian Sacrifice. For it is the very fact that the whole Christ—Body and Blood—Soul and Divinity—is present under either species that is the strong argument for the sufficiency of reception under one kind, as far as the sacramental effect is concerned. It is the very fact that the consecration itself is a most august Christian rite, altogether prescinding from the Eucharistic Sacrament, that enables us to see how our Lord's institution is not maimed in Catholic practice but fulfilled. And it is the fact that that Consecration is not a ceremony whose effects cease with the action performed, but which leaves behind it an object, permanent, stable and divine, that enables us to understand how the sacramental effect may be produced without the repetition of the whole Eucharistic rite.

But our adversaries allege the distinct command of our Lord—"Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you,"¹ and the words of St. Paul—"Whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the Chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord".² The Council of Trent forestalled this difficulty. We read in its chapters on the Holy Eucharist: ³ "He who said, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and

¹ St. John vi. 54.

² 1 Cor. xi. 27.

³ Session xxi., cap. 1.

drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you, also said, If any one eat of this bread he shall live for ever; and He who said, He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life, also said, The bread that I shall give is My Flesh for the life of the world; and finally, He who said, He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me and I in him, said nevertheless, He that eateth this bread shall live for ever”.

It may be remarked that the greater number of non-Catholics altogether refuse to see in the sixth chapter of St. John any reference to the Holy Eucharist. Their controversialists, however, are not above pressing that chapter into their service when there appears to be a chance of damaging the Church of Rome.¹ There never was a specimen of more inconclusive reasoning than that which non-Catholics found upon this chapter. Nowhere, in the whole of the chapter, is one word said about receiving under both species. The command that is given is to partake of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But, surely, such partaking is verified even if one partake of the Host merely. The Holy Eucharist was instituted as a meal, or eating. In human custom, a man is said to “eat,” or “make a meal,” or “partake,” even if one abstain from using a cup or drinking vessel. And, on the other hand, to partake of liquid, or quasi-liquid, nourishment out of a cup, would justly be called making a meal. If, therefore, it be true that the Body and Blood of the Lord are wholly under either species, there is nothing in any command of Christ—as far as the sixth chapter of St. John is concerned—that bids us do more than join in that heavenly meal which is rendered possible by the Eucharistic Presence under either species. We are commanded to eat and drink the holy Body and Blood—not the species of bread and the species of wine.

¹ See Littledale's *Plain Reasons*, p. 62.

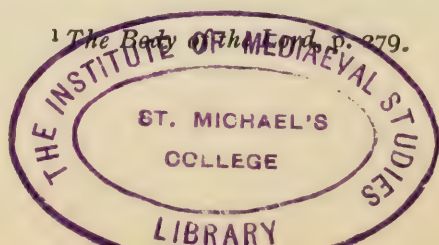
But it is insisted that St. Paul certainly intended the faithful to receive under both kinds. He certainly did. But when he says that a man sins by receiving unworthily the Bread and the Cup, it is strange reasoning that would see in this a denial that a man also sinned by unworthily receiving either of them. To receive under both kinds was the practice in St. Paul's day. He makes a remark implying that practice. He says nothing further, because nothing further occurred to be said. If a preacher said that a man who appeared in Westminster Abbey at the coronation in a state of intoxication insulted the King and Queen, would it be fair argument to say that that preacher evidently considered there would have been no insult if the King had been there by himself?

But I believe I am well within the mark in saying that the overwhelming preponderance of manuscript authority makes for the reading of 1 Cor. xi. 27 as translated in our version; *viz.*, "Whosoever shall eat the bread *or* drink the chalice," etc. The Anglican Authorised Version has *and*; but the Revisers have restored the *or*. The whole argument, therefore, falls to the ground, as far as this particular verse is concerned. The other passages cited from this chapter—that is, the verse preceding (26) and the verse following (28), can be made to prove nothing except that in St. Paul's time the Holy Communion was received under both kinds; which no one has ever denied.

The most "advanced" modern Anglicans are strangely confused when they come to speak of the practice of Communion under one kind. Bishop Gore says: "The mediæval doctrine that the whole Christ is present under each particle of either kind can hardly be denied by any one who affirms the indivisible spiritual unity of the living Christ; but in view of our Lord's institution of the Communion in two kinds, it is indeed wonderful how Christians can prefer a fallible logic of

Sacramental presence rather than the manifested intention of our Lord.”¹

This passage amply confirms what was said higher up—that the opposition to Communion under one kind is intimately connected with the denial of the Real Presence itself. What Bishop Gore calls the “fallible logic of Sacramental Presence” is the defined Catholic doctrine that our Lord is wholly present under each particle of both species. And it is certainly going too far to assert that our Lord has “manifested” His “intention” on the precise point now under discussion. The point is, not whether the double Consecration with double reception by the consecrator, is what our Lord intended, for this we concede and maintain; but whether the double reception by those not acting as consecrators was intended; and intended in such a sense that the Church was to have no power to regulate or modify it. Doubtless, our Lord said, “Drink ye, all, of this,” and doubtless the Apostles “all drank” of the Cup, as they had partaken of the Bread. But it is clear that the command here expressed by the words “eat” and “drink” is primarily given, not to express any twofold reception, but rather to impress upon those present that He was really giving Himself to them as food. If we put ourselves in our Lord’s position, and realise what He was aiming at, we shall find that He was not laying any emphasis on “drinking” as distinct from eating, but was impressing upon them that He was giving them His sacred Body and Blood as a banquet or meal. Neither should the word “all” cause any difficulty. It is unwarrantable to suppose it meant that “all” were to drink under pain of not receiving the full grace of Communion; its use by our Blessed Lord was clearly intended to convey that the Holy Eucharist was a common banquet; that what our Lord was then giving was not a “morsel” to this or that favourite disciple; but that it was



the common meal of the Christian community ; as if He said, This is not for Peter, or for John, or for Judas ; it is the "Communion" of you all. If this is not so, then there has been, even from the beginning of Christianity, an occasional acquiescence in sacrilegious communion, without protest from Bishop or Council. The heretical view, that the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is not received unless it is partaken of in both kinds, was first formulated by the Bohemian religious agitators in the first years of the fifteenth century. In various senses, and for various reasons, it was taken up by Luther and by Calvin. Luther's views varied at various periods of his mental history. But Luther, as we gather from his words, did not affect to consider the question on its merits ; it was rather that he was determined not to obey Pope, Council, or Bishop.¹ The Sacramentarians, with Calvin at their head, denying the Objective Presence, naturally argued against the refusal of the Cup to the laity. All the modern Protestant arguments will be found in Calvin's Institutes,² in Kemnitz's discussion on the Council of Trent, and in Melancthon's *Apologia* for the Augsburg Confession.

For the sake of clearness and completeness, I will here add a translation of the decrees of the Council of Trent on Communion in one kind :—

"This Holy Synod . . . following the judgment and practice of the Church, declareth and teacheth, that the laity, and the clergy when not celebrating, are by no divine precept obliged to take the Sacrament of the Eucharist under both species ; and that it can in no wise be questioned, without failing in the faith, that communion under either species sufficeth for salvation ; for although Christ our Lord, in the last Supper, instituted this venerable Sacrament under the species of bread and wine, and so delivered it to the Apostles, yet

¹ See Bellarmine, *Controversiæ* ; *De Sacr. Euch.*, lib. iv., cap 20.

² B. iv., ch. 17, par. 47 sqq.

that institution and delivery do not warrant the assertion that all the Christian faithful are bound by the prescription of the Lord to receive both species. . . .¹

"Moreover (the Synod) declares that the Church hath always had the power to prescribe and change, in the dispensation of the Sacraments (saving the substance thereof), whatever she judged expedient for the good of the receivers or the honour and reverence of the Sacraments themselves, according to the requirements of circumstances, times and places . . . Wherefore our holy Mother, the Church, recognising this her authority in the administration of the Sacraments, although from the beginning of Christianity the use of both species was not uncommon, nevertheless as time went on and that custom became nearly everywhere abrogated, moved thereto by grave and just reasons, hath approved the practice of communicating under one species, and hath made it the law; and it may not be blamed, nor without the authority of the Church herself changed at will.²

"She moreover declares, that although Our Redeemer, as said above, in His last Supper did institute this Sacrament under two species, and so deliver it to the Apostles, nevertheless, it is to be acknowledged that even under one species Christ whole and complete is received, and is the true Sacrament; and that therefore, as regards fruit or benefit, those who receive one species only are defrauded of no grace necessary unto salvation."³

The last words of this passage should be noted. The Council declares that those who receive under one species only are "defrauded of no grace necessary for salvation". The definition was thus worded in order to leave open a domestic Catholic controversy. Many Catholic theologians maintain that a special grace accompanies the reception of the Chalice; a grace, therefore, of

¹ Session xx., cap. 1.

² *Ibid.*, cap. 2.

³ *Ibid.*, cap. 3.

which the laity are deprived. They find that grace expressed in those words of the *Sacris sollemniis* :—

Dedit et tristibus sanguinis poculum.

That is, it is some special kind of joy, encouragement and consolation, over and above the spiritual refection which is proper to the Holy Eucharist. I have never been able to accept this view, nor the reasons by which it is defended. This special grace of comfort is either the sacramental grace of the Holy Eucharist, or it is not. If it is, it must be received by those who take the species of bread only; because the Council of Trent defines that the “true Sacrament” is thereby received. If it is not, there is no grace conveyed *ex opere operato*, no grace deriving from the Chalice as sacramental; whatever grace, then, is acquired by the reception of the Chalice must depend merely on the acts of the recipient. But the acts of the recipient may vary indefinitely; some recipients would receive one kind of grace, some another, some none at all. If it were true that any portion of the sacramental grace, properly so called, was conveyed only to those who received under both species, I do not see how the Cup could be justly denied to the laity. At the most, the reception of the Chalice (when added to the reception of the Host) would seem to afford a more prolonged opportunity for those interior acts by which the communicants profit by the Sacramental participation, and so be a stimulus to personal devotion. These benefits are not to be despised; but they can be compensated for in other ways by the lay communicant.

The custom of receiving Holy Communion fasting is one which arises, not from a command of our Lord, but from an ecclesiastical precept. It is clear from 1 Cor. xi. that, in apostolic times the Holy Eucharist was celebrated after a supper. There can be little doubt that the practice of celebrating “after supper” was simply an imitation of what our Lord Himself did on the night

before He suffered. But this Supper, at which Christians of all ranks met, to which each family contributed supplies of food, and at which the poor were entertained, was not the same thing as the Eucharistic celebration itself. It was called the Agape (ἀγάπη, or in the plural ἀγάπαι). We find the word in St. Jude's Epistle, where he speaks of "spots in your banquets," a passage which would be more correctly translated "scandals at your love-feasts" (ἀγάπαις).¹ At first this Supper was followed by the Eucharistic celebration. By degrees, for reasons such as those touched upon by St. Paul in the passage referred to—that men often made themselves unfit, by their intemperate use of the Supper, for the reception of the Body of Christ—the Holy Eucharist was placed before the Agape; and then the two institutions were entirely separated, the Eucharist taking place in the morning.² The Christian Agape, to which Pliny clearly refers in his Letter to Trajan, flourished till about the middle of the fourth century, and, indeed, in the shape of eatings and drinkings at funerals, on Church festivals, at the shrines of martyrs, etc., we meet with the remnants of the Love-feast much later. There is a well-known passage in St. Augustine's *Confessions* (vi. 2) in which St. Monica, when at Milan, is described as bringing a basket of provisions to a martyr's sepulchre, according to the African custom, and then finding that St. Ambrose had condemned that custom on account of its being too near akin to the Pagan *parentalia*. Some have discovered a trace of the ancient Love-feast in that passage of St. Gregory's letter to St. Mellitus, in which, after instructing him not to have the Pagan temples destroyed, but rather re-dedicated as Christian churches, he proceeds

¹ There is an almost parallel passage in 2 Peter, ii. 13. The word here in the best texts is ἀγάπαις.

² See "L'Agape dans l'Eglise primitive," par V. Ermoni (*Science et Religion*), who gives good reasons for not accepting the views of Mgr. Batiffol. See also the elaborate article "Agape" in the *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie chrétienne* of Abbot Cabrol.

to suggest how the Saxon converts might still keep up a certain solemnity in the place of their old sacrifices of oxen. "On the day of dedication," he says, "or on the festivals of the holy Martyrs whose relics are there enshrined, let them set up tents of boughs around the newly consecrated churches, and let them celebrate the solemnity with religious banquets . . . praising God whilst they slay and eat, and giving thanks to the Giver of all things."¹ The distribution of the *pain béni*, so common in France, is no doubt distantly connected with the primitive Agape, which took many shapes when the conversion of the peoples of the West brought the Church face to face with varying national usages.

The law of fasting before Holy Communion, like many observances in the Catholic Church, came in gradually. As early as the middle of the third century, we find St. Cyprian insisting on the greater worthiness of the morning Communion over that which was made after the Agape in the evening. From St. John Chrysostom, St. Ambrose and St. Augustine we gather that it was a universal practice to receive fasting at the end of the fourth century. In the time of the last Father († 430) it appears to have been looked upon as obligatory. He says: "It is beyond dispute that when the disciples first received the Body and Blood of the Lord, they did not receive fasting. Are we, therefore, to blame the whole Church because every one does receive fasting? No; for it pleased the Holy Spirit that, in honour of so great a Sacrament, the Body of the Lord should pass Christian lips before other food; for it is on that account that that custom is observed throughout the whole world. . . . The Lord did not prescribe in what order (that is, with what observances) it should be received, that He might reserve this privilege for the Apostles, through whom He was to regulate the Churches; for if He had recommended that it should

¹ Ven. Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, i., 30.

be received after other food, I suppose no one would have deviated from that practice.”¹ Thus St. Augustine makes it clear, first, that the practice of fasting Communion was universal in his time, and, secondly, that it was of ecclesiastical institution, enjoined, indeed, by the Apostles themselves. He adds that it was St. Paul, in his third visit to the Christians of Corinth, who first made the law. This, however, is by no means certain. For a considerable time after St. Augustine’s day there was one occasion in the year when non-fasting Communion was permitted, and even expected—that was on Maundy Thursday, the day of the Supper of our Lord. In the middle ages the nature of the Communion fast was not accurately defined. We meet with local rules and recommendations, from the time of St. John Chrysostom downwards, enjoining a certain fast *after* Communion as well as before. In 1418 the Council of Constance laid down, in the form of a Canon, the law that was already practically observed, that the Holy Eucharist should not be consecrated after supper, and should never be received by the faithful non-fasting, except in the case of infirmity, or other necessity recognised by the Church. That this fast must be what is called a “natural” fast—that is, a fast which precludes any food or drink whatsoever, we do not find stated in any Canon; we gather it from the custom of the Church. The same may be said of the prescription that it begin from the previous midnight. But both these rules have for three centuries at least been embodied in the rubrics of the Roman missal, which, in this matter, has almost copied the words of St. Thomas of Aquin.²

¹ *Epist.*, cxviii., cap. 6.

² III., qu. 80.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

AMONG the seven great external "signs" which we call the Sacraments, the Blessed Eucharist is peculiar and unique. Of the other six Sacraments, that of Penance is conferred in the judicial act of absolution, and has its Sacramental effect in the loosing of the sinner from his sin. The remaining five—Baptism, Confirmation, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony—are Sacraments given once for all and not repeated.¹

All these five Sacraments agree in this, that they confer something on the soul, or cause something in the soul, which is distinct from grace, whether habitual or other, and entails and produces the effusion of the special sacramental grace. In Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders this is called the "character"; in Extreme Unction and Matrimony theologians are not agreed in calling it by that name; probably because in these two Sacraments repetition is absolutely possible. As, however, in these Sacraments no repetition can take place unless the subject passes into a new state or condition, or makes a fresh contract, there seems no reason for doubting that something equivalent to the "character" is conferred—that is to say, a permanent effect

¹ It is true that Extreme Unction and Matrimony may be given more than once—but not more than once during a given state or period, for which they have a permanent and sufficing efficacy; thus Extreme Unction is for the whole period of an illness, and Matrimony for the whole period of the marital union which it blesses.

or modification is wrought in the soul, entailing the effusion of the sacramental grace. We thus can see how these five Sacraments may be conferred validly, and validly received, and yet no sacramental grace may follow. For the conferring of the Sacrament always bestows on the soul what we have called the "character," but if the soul be in unrepented mortal sin the sacramental grace is held back. As soon, however, as sin is got rid of, the "character" produces its effect, and the sacramental grace accrues. This is called the "revival" (*reviviscentia*) of the Sacrament, or of the graces of the Sacrament.¹

The unique position of the Holy Eucharist among all the Sacraments of the New Covenant can now be very clearly perceived. In the Holy Eucharist no "character" is conferred. That permanent immutation of the soul which we call the "character" is not needed in this great Sacrament, because the Sacrament itself is a permanent thing, *viz.*, the Body of Christ under the species. In the other sacramental rites, the Sacrament only comes into being in the act of conferring; in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the sacramental reality is objectively constant, and is intended to be constantly used; so that the constant partaking of the permanent Sacrament takes the place of an interior endowment given once for all. This is in accordance with the purpose for which the Holy Eucharist was given to men. The other Sacraments—I do not here speak of Penance—are intended to set up our fallen nature by giving it, permanently, that rectitude and some of that light and strength which it had lost. They are meant to "renew" human nature. But the Eucharist, whilst giving graces of light and help, is meant to be a daily food, sanctifying the soul's ceaseless activity by repeated intercourse with the life-giving and transforming Christ.

¹ It is true that some Theologians dispute the fact of "revival" in the case of Extreme Unction and Matrimony. But the opposite opinion seems better founded.

The Holy Eucharist, therefore, does not "revive". An unworthy receiver receives the Body of the Lord, but the soul does not receive the Sacrament, nor the sacramental grace. If repentance follows, and sin is wiped away, a fresh reception must take place before that grace is poured upon the soul.¹

A sacrilegious or unworthy Communion is a Communion made by a person who is consciously in a state of mortal sin, or who commits a mortal sin, at the moment of Communion. That to communicate unworthily is a grievous offence against God needs no demonstration. The unworthy recipient is described by St. Paul as "guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord".² The word translated "guilty" means more literally "liable," as before observed; that is, liable to punishment in view of the injury or outrage to the Body and Blood of the Lord. The point is, that the unworthy communicant has to answer, not for profaning an ordinary observance, or for ill-behaviour in a minor rite, but for the sacrilege which is involved in his evil treatment of our Lord Himself in the Sacrament. This is the true estimate of the sin of unworthy Communion. It is not the greatest of possible sins, but it is a sin which is peculiarly abhorrent. Yet St. Thomas wisely observes that sometimes an unworthy Communion must be classed in the least intense grade of mortal sins—for example, in the case of those who are led to commit this sin by the fear of being set down as sinners.³ Children, and others, who make bad Communions for one reason or another, may be really guilty of grave

¹ The fact that the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is in existence antecedently to the act of administration has led to a certain confusion of terms. By the Fathers and the Theologians, the word Sacrament is sometimes applied, as we have seen, to the Body and Blood of our Lord under the species; sometimes to the reception of the Holy Communion; and sometimes to the spiritual effect on the soul, or the sacramental grace. A careful scrutiny of the exact sense of a passage will lead to an easy solution of certain difficulties raised by non-Catholics, for example, in the language of St. Augustine. See pp 69, 70 *supra*.

² 1 Cor. xi. 27.

³ III., qu. 80., art. 5.

sin, but not sin of the worst intensity. The teacher should be careful not to exaggerate or to drive to fear, to reticence and despair, by dwelling on the treason of Judas or accumulating terrifying legends.

The precise sin of the unworthy communicant is rightly called Sacrilege. It is one of the sins that are against the virtue of "Religion," which prescribes the discharge of the greatest and the most fundamental of man's duties—that of supreme adoration and absolute service to his Creator. Sacrilege is the unworthy treatment of a holy person, place or thing. Under the denomination of "holy things" come all the Sacraments of the Church. But especially holy is that Sacrament which is not only the instrument of the Holy Spirit conveying grace, but the very Christ Himself. The sacrilege involved in a bad Communion is not only the violation of a holy thing, but the affront to Christ in person.

We have distinguished between the sacramental and the merely physical reception of our Lord's Body. There is a third kind, which, although it is only in a figurative sense called Communion, is yet considered to be of great importance in the Christian life, and is carefully dwelt upon by theologians and by the Council of Trent. "Our Fathers," says the Council, "have rightly and wisely distinguished three ways of receiving this holy Sacrament. They teach that some partake of it sacramentally only, as those who are in the state of sin; others spiritually only, that is to say, those who, eating in desire the heavenly Bread before them, by living faith working through love, make their own the fruit and the advantages thereof; and others, in the third place, at once sacramentally and spiritually; and these are they who so prove and prepare themselves beforehand that they approach the Divine Table clad in the wedding garment."¹

¹ Sess. xiii., cap. 8. The Council follows St. Thomas (iii., qu. 80, art. 1, ad. 1) in saying that persons who make bad Communions receive

It is amongst the earliest of the scholastics that we first meet with the term "spiritual communion," as formally distinguished from the other two. Denis the Carthusian, Albertus Magnus and St. Bonaventure all use the phrase and it is clear that the Fathers of the Council of Trent, in formulating the passage just quoted, had St. Bonaventure's words before them.¹ Scotus distinguishes these three, and adds a fourth, the reception of the Sacrament by a non-baptised person in good and proper dispositions. Our Lord's Body under the species would not be to him a "sacred sign" or Sacrament, and he would not by virtue of such reception receive the sacramental grace. St. Thomas does not speak of spiritual communion.

Spiritual Communion, or Communion in desire, requires, in St. Bonaventure's phrase, "both the rumination of faith and the affection of charity". The Saints of the Old Law could not make a spiritual Communion; for, although they longed and sighed for the day of Christ, they did not specifically foresee in revelation the mystery of the Eucharist. The Angels, the Blessed in Heaven, and the holy Souls in Purgatory are incapable of making a spiritual Communion; they are all out of the region of the Sacraments. In Heaven the object and end of all sacramental efficacy is attained; in Purgatory all sacramental action is suspended. It would appear that the effect of spiritual Communion is not properly "sacramental," but that it is entirely owing to the soul's own exertions (the grace of God understood). This, no doubt, is true. Yet the Council of Trent speaks as if, by a spiritual Communion, the soul partook of the "fruit and advantages" of the Blessed Sacrament itself. We cannot doubt that the faith and love of the heart, directed to the Blessed Sacrament, especially when It

sacramentally; the meaning is that they receive the holy sign, or thing significant of grace. It is more convenient to call this a *physical* reception, as above.

¹ S. Bonav., iv., *Dist.*, ix., a. 2.

is present, are specially efficacious in obtaining the graces which that Sacrament is meant to bring with it. Whether we call it sacramental or not, such an effect indicates a gracious bounty on the part of our Blessed Lord which is more than our own devout efforts would deserve.

But the fulness of the fruit of the Sacrament of the Eucharist can only be enjoyed by those who communicate physically and in proper dispositions. What these fruits are we will now go on to consider.

That which is conveyed by the greatest of the Sacraments is the perfection of the greatest of all virtues, the virtue of Charity. This is the *res* of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. It is true that all the Sacraments, since they confer Grace, confer Charity, either bringing it where it was absent, or increasing it when present. This is because sanctifying Grace necessarily brings Charity, and Charity is more or less intense in proportion to the higher or lower intensity of Divine Grace. This is not the place to inquire whether the Sacraments of the living confer sanctifying Grace on those who in good faith approach them in a state of unconscious mortal sin. The general opinion is that they do; for the reason that it is certain *de fide* that the Sacraments invariably confer grace upon those who interpose no obstacle; and there cannot be said to be an obstacle when the recipient is blamelessly unconscious of any. It is sufficient, however, to say that all the Sacraments give grace, and therefore Charity.

But when we say that the effect of the Holy Eucharist is the perfecting of Charity, we do not speak merely of an effect which is common to all the Sacraments. Each Sacrament has a specific effect of its own. The Holy Eucharist has a specific effect of its own.

Moreover, the specific effect of the Holy Eucharist will be, not merely actual grace, but habitual grace as well. There will be the infusion of a "habit" of some kind, or the enhancing of a habit already possessed.

For it must be remembered that the Sacraments are ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ as medicines against sin and as a participation of the effects of our Lord's Passion.¹ This implies that they do more than give an "actual" grace. They must effect or confer something in the nature of a "virtue," or a gift. It is true, we cannot always get a name for this sacramental influence or immutation. Sin is so multiform, the wounds of our nature are so various and indescribable, that it would be an endless task, and in some cases an impossible one, to distinguish all the sacramental influences by their names. But we may lay it down as certain that the habitual sacramental grace, as such, is a divine immutation of the soul, or a supernatural disposition, of a permanent kind, intended and adapted to attain the end or purpose for which the Sacrament is instituted; or in other words, an influence received in the soul's powers and acting as a sedative of concupiscence, especially such concupiscence as the particular Sacrament is intended to counteract. There is no need to prove that the Sacraments also confer actual graces for the same ends.

First, then, what is the special habitual disposition conferred on the powers of the soul of man by the Holy Eucharist? No doubt this is difficult to define. The answer might be, that it is the increase of sanctifying grace. But this is not carrying the matter very far. The increase of sanctifying grace means the more abundant possession by grace of the powers of the soul. We want to know what are the particular powers or dispositions which the Eucharist causes to be specially brought under the influence of habitual grace. We may probably arrive at this by remembering that, as we shall have to consider just now, the work of the Eucharist is to transform man into the likeness of Christ by charity. If this be so, the habit to which we refer (or

¹ St. Thomas, *De Veritate*, q. 27, a. 5, ad. 12^{um}

the habits, for there may be more than one department of the soul's energy affected) must be such as are adapted to render such transformation swift, easy and thorough ; or, in other words, to enlighten and strengthen human nature so that the acts of the heart may be the more intensely and the more constantly conformed to those of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ. It must be therefore both a negative and a positive disposition. On the negative side, it must be the quenching of egotism ; the neutralising of what spiritual writers call Self. The consciousness of Self, the appreciation of Self, and the gratification of Self, is what chiefly prevents a soul from being transformed into Christ. The impulses which come under the general name of Self are not passing temptations coming from without ; they are the outflow of a perennial spring in the very core of human nature. Given reason and consciousness, the primary emotion of fallen human nature is to realise Self and to act defensively and offensively in the interests of Self. It is this fatal native impulsion that the healing power of the Holy Eucharist is intended to weaken and to hold in check. On the positive side, that Sacrament must be held to impart a peculiar influence from the Sacred Humanity of Christ. It seems that it overshadows the human impulses with Christ's spirit. The "mind" or spirit of Christ¹ as St. Paul describes it, is chiefly recognised in His humility, obedience and acceptance of suffering. This spirit He can communicate. That He does communicate it to those who press near Him, *usu quodam et copia suæ naturæ*—as if by the neighbourhood of His nature, as St. Ambrose expresses it²—and to those who receive His Body in the Eucharist, is certain. The soul of man, in this way, receives a permanent inclination or bias. Those powers, wherever they are hidden in the elusive folds of the complex nature of man, which have the office of

¹ Philip. ii. 5 *sqq.*

² *In Lucam*, v., c. 6.

bowing the spirit to its God, of choosing lowly discipline and self-denying obedience in order to secure that attitude of reverence, and of welcoming all that is hard and bitter that its love may be purer and more intense—on these human powers, as when the spirit of the Lord falls upon a prophet, the spirit of Christ falls with strength, light and healing, in the communion of His Body and Blood.

The actual graces given by the reception of the Holy Eucharist have been variously described by the Fathers, by theologians and by spiritual writers. But they all fasten upon that text of St. John, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me, and I in him".¹ These words are justly taken to mean transformation into Christ. They are illustrated by a passage from the first Epistle of the same Evangelist: "He that abideth in Charity, abideth in God, and God in him".² That Jesus should abide in man signifies that He becomes intimately present to man, not substantially, but touching by His efficacious contact man's powers and springs of activity. That man should abide in Jesus means that all his powers are subjected or held close to this Divine influence. This implies that the living energy of the soul takes the same direction as that of Christ, and is imbued with His spirit. This is transformation.

This transformation is brought about by the sacramental contact; and it does not import the mere influx or increase of sanctifying grace, or of any habitual gift of grace. It means also active graces, influencing man's own active powers. As Dionysius the Carthusian says, the *res* of this Sacrament—that is, its proper and formal effect—is, "charity, and the act of charity, and the inflammation or flaming of charity".³ Or in the words of St. Thomas: the *res* of this Sacrament "is charity not only habitually but also in act, for act is by it

¹ VI. 57.² IV. 16.³ *De Sacr. Alt.*, a. 20.

excited".¹ And in another place: "In this Sacrament is not only conferred habitual grace, but there is stirred up the fervour of actual devotion".² And again, "This is the Sacrament of Love (Charity); it signifies love, and effects love"—*Hoc est sacramentum charitatis, quasi figurativum et effectivum*.³ And we may also cite to the same effect a passage which is a luminous commentary on St. Paul: "By this Sacrament, through its own power, not only is conferred the habit of grace and virtue, but they are also excited to act, according to that of St. Paul, The Charity of Christ constraineth us".⁴ Charity follows grace; and this actively working grace of the Eucharist is active Charity. No doubt it might be called by many names; but it is most properly called Charity. For Charity is the chief of all virtues, and the virtue whose special office it is to unite man with God; and as the Holy Eucharist is the chief of all the Sacraments, and contains nothing less than Christ Himself, the source and fount of all grace, its special grace is the perfection or fulness of the principal grace of all. Hence the principal effect of the Eucharist is the stirring up of the spiritual nature to an activity of the same kind as actuates our Lord Himself. If He brings life and action, He brings no other life and no other activity than those which are found in His own most sacred Heart. Now this is transformation. The heart of man comes to breathe the same sentiments and to break forth in the same acts as the Heart of Jesus. This is what St. Thomas means by what he describes as the "*transformatio hominis in Christum per amorem*".⁵ He is transformed by Love of God; not by illumination, or by fortitude, or by purity, or by humility, although all these accompany and follow Love; but by an effect which directly bears upon that central and essential faculty of man's nature, his intel-

¹ III., q. 79, a. 4.² IV., *Dist.*, 12, q. 2, n. 2, sol. 1, ad. 2.³ III., 78, a. 3, ad. 6.⁴ III., 79, a. 1., ad. 2.⁵ IV., *Dist.*, 12, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 1.

lectual will. It is the will which moves and directs the whole array of man's powers. His will is that essential reaching-out power of the self which may either refuse to go outside of itself, or may extend its grasp to something external—and according to the way in which it thus behaves, man becomes merely selfish, or lamentably soiled and vitiated, or purified and elevated—or finally, if God be the object of the will, united to the supreme Good, and the absolute End. Such a union, such a condition of the will, exercises a most powerful effect upon every one of the subordinate emotions, and on the whole spiritual activity. Thus the transformation which has its root and substance in the will, and in the Divine Charity which affects the will, will tend to become more and more complete as it makes good its ground in every department of man's complex nature.

This transforming effect of the Holy Eucharist is undoubtedly intended to be signified by the very matter and form of the Sacrament. In the words of the Catechism of the Council of Trent: "All that bread and wine do for the body is done by this Sacrament for the well-being and delight of the soul, and that in a better and more perfect fashion. The Sacrament is not indeed changed into our substance as are bread and wine, but we in a certain way are changed into it; so that the words of St. Augustine may be here applied: I am the food of the grown-up; grow, and thou shalt eat me; and thou shalt not transmute me into thyself, as with the food of thy flesh, but thou shalt be changed into me".¹ And in the phrase of St. Thomas: "The effect of the Sacrament corresponds to what is externally done in its administration".² This analogy is universally insisted and enlarged on by theologians. But it must be carefully noted that it is not more than an

¹ St. Augustine, however, in this passage (*Conf.* vii. 10) is not speaking of the Holy Eucharist, but of the soul's coming to the knowledge of God.

² IV., *Dist.*, 12, q. 2, a 2, sol. 2.

analogy. The Holy Eucharist is the soul's food ; but only after a spiritual, or rather we should say, a metaphorical fashion. It nourishes the soul—in the words of the Council of Trent it is “spiritualis animarum cibus” ; but it is not itself consumed. As we have seen, it does not pass into our substance, but we into it. As St. Augustine says, it is “Panis qui nos reficit, nec deficit”.¹ To quote from a beautiful passage in the celebrated Bull *Transiturus* of Urban IV.: “This bread is eaten, but not transmuted ; it is nowise changed into the consumer ; but if it be worthily received, the recipient becomes like to It. This transmutation is brought about by the streaming in upon us of the spirit and life of Christ. As a result, Christ liveth in us² ; our thoughts, our senses and impulses, our will and activity assume a resemblance to the hidden life of the Eucharistic Saviour, and become Divine.”

It is this transformation into Christ, or union with Christ, that brings about that other union, about which the Christian Church has always been so solicitous, the union of the members of Christ in one mystical body. The word Communion, which is the universal name for the Eucharistic banquet, implies both these kinds of union—and the one kind, indeed, implies the other. The name of Communion was no doubt taken in the first instance from that word of St. Paul : “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communication (or communion—*κοινωνία*) of the Blood of Christ ; and the Bread which we break, is it not the communication of the Body of Christ ? ”³ The word means a participation, and the Apostle would have us understand that in the Holy Communion we participate or partake of the Body and the Blood of Christ. The same word is used in the Acts⁴ when it is said that the faithful were “devoted to . . . the communication and the breaking of

¹ In *Joan.*, Tr. xxv., n. 13.

³ I Cor. x. 16.

² Gal. ii. 20.

⁴ II. 42.

Bread"—that is, to the communication of the Bread.¹ One of the very earliest Christian ideas was that the common partaking of the Body of Christ was at once a symbol of fraternal union and an incitement to maintain that union. "(As) there is one Bread," says St. Paul, "so we, (though) many, are one body; for we all participate in the one Bread."² Therefore the "assembly" of the faithful (*σύναξις*), held principally for the purpose of the Eucharistic liturgy, became itself a name for the Eucharist; as if that "gathering together" signified the universal Christian unity brought about by the Sacrament. In the words of St. Thomas, the unity of the mystical Body is the fruit of the real Body sacramentally received.³ Each heart being a partaker of Christ, and being transformed into Christ, is linked and united with every other heart. The putting on of Christ's ways and Christ's life, which is the primary fruit of the Sacrament, makes all Christian souls resemble one another. Souls and hearts which are one with Jesus, are essentially united with one another. They live by His living spirit, and the same spirit lives in them all, and that spirit is the vivifying spirit of Christ's mystical body. It is this unitive power of the Holy Eucharist which causes St. Augustine to exclaim, "O Sacramentum pietatis! O signum unitatis! O vinculum charitatis."⁴ In the words of the Council of Trent, our Saviour has left in His Church the Eucharist as a symbol of that unity and charity in which He desires all Christians to be united and joined together.⁵ In many passages of the Fathers we find the common participation of the Holy Eucharist—the assembling round the same Table of the Lord—urged as a reason

¹ It is not probable that "the communication" or the Communion, is here employed absolutely, as we should use the phrase, and as it began to be used very early in the Christian Church. St. Paul's phrase is rather a hendiadys—and should be read "the communication of the breaking of Bread".

² 1 Cor. x. 17.

⁴ In *Joan.*, xxvi. 13.

³ III., Qu. 82, art. 9, ad. 2.

⁵ Sess. xiii., cap. 1.

for mutual brotherly love. For example, St. John Chrysostom exclaims: "To the Cæsar in his purple and his diadem, who rules the world, and to the poor man who asks for an alm, the same Banquet is prepared".¹ And again: "The Lord has given Himself for thee, but never dost thou give thy brother refreshment; the Lord hath considered all worthy of the same Banquet. . . . And thou holdest the poor man to be unworthy of thy table; . . . Christ hath given His Body to all equally, and thou refusest to distribute to others thy common bread."²

The principal and primary effect of the Holy Eucharist in the soul of the worthy communicant is further described by St. Thomas in the four words, Nourishment or Sustentation, Growth, Repair and Delight.

All that is done for corporal life by meat and drink, that is to sustain, to cause growth, to repair loss, and to give delight—all this is done for the spiritual life by this Sacrament.³ Let us see what these phrases mean. They draw out into greater detail the idea of transformation into Christ.

1. *Sustentation or Nutriment*.—When we say that the Holy Eucharist is the soul's nutriment or sustentation, we are clearly referring to our Lord's words, "If any man shall eat of it, he shall live for ever," "Unless you eat . . . you shall have no life in you".⁴ It will be noticed that our Lord, in these passages, does not only assert that there is an intimate relation between life everlasting and the Holy Eucharist, but also between the Holy Eucharist and actual life in the present state. This must mean, as I need not say, the supernatural life of the soul; the life of grace. But there are many commandments and duties on which the life of grace depends. For example, it can be most truly asserted that unless a man prays, he has no life in him—because the neglect of prayer may conceivably reach

¹ *De Resurr. D. N. Jesu Christi*, Par. 3. Migne, *P.G.*, vol. 1., p. 438.

² *In 1 Cor. Hom.*, 27, n. 3, 4.

³ *III.*, qu. 79, 1.

⁴ John vi. 50-55.

a point at which it will constitute mortal sin. We must observe, therefore, that, according to the Fathers, the Holy Eucharist has a special relation to the life of the soul, just as food has a special relation to the life of the body. That relation is the relation of nutrition; the Holy Eucharist nourishes when received; and, when it is not received, there is inanition and weakness. How is this verified in the spiritual soul? In this way: Good food, properly assimilated, causes all the tissues, nerve-centres, and organs of the body to exercise their function with that vigour, promptitude and thoroughness that we call health. So the Holy Eucharist, partly by the habitual grace which it brings, and partly by the actual fervour of devotion which it confers, causes the functions of the soul to be exercised in strong acts of every virtue, and especially of charity. Now this is the health and strength of the soul; not a passive or habitual state, merely, but an active exercise of its powers in union with God. When this exercise is vigorous and prompt, the soul is strong and healthy; when it dies down, it is in the same proportion languishing, sick and feeble. Hence when the Holy Eucharist is called the "medicine" of the soul, the word must be understood in the sense of a medicine which promotes the activity of the powers of life—*medicina confortiva*.¹ It does not cure mortal sin; that must be eliminated before it is received. But it is a preservative against mortal sin—*a mortalibus præservat*.² For just as men are preserved from death by good food, so the Holy Eucharist, by strengthening the powers of the spirit, by deadening concupiscence, and by assisting us against our ghostly enemy, saves us from deadly falls. Thus, in the phrase of the Missal, it is *fortitudo fragilium, contra omnia mundi pericula firmamentum*; and we may apply to it the words of the Psalm—"Thou hast prepared in my sight a table against them

¹ III., q. 80, a. 1, ad. 2.

² Trid. Sess., xiii., cap. 2.

that trouble me.”¹ St. Thomas’s expression is, “It introduces us into the Kingdom of Heaven as it were like a viaticum”.² The Kingdom of Heaven begins on earth and is fully developed in eternity. Hence the phrase “shall live for ever”³ indicates a temporal condition, but a temporal condition which in due course will pass into the eternal. So that, again, in the words of St. Thomas: *Effectus hujus sacramenti est adeptio gloriæ*.⁴ It is the “supersubstantial bread” which carries man through his life. Hence the earnest exhortation of the Council of Trent that the faithful would receive that supersubstantial bread frequently so that it may be to them in very truth the life of the soul and the unfailing health of their spirit (*sanitas mentis*), by whose strength they may, after passing through this miserable pilgrimage, arrive at their heavenly country, there to feed upon that Bread of Angels fully revealed which they now partake of under sacred veils.⁵

2. *Growth*.—This is that *spiritus pinguedo* of the office of Corpus Christi. “Growth” is really the same thing as nutrition. When good food is received by a healthy body, there is growth, if there is assimilation. But when we apply the analogy to the Holy Eucharist there is this notable difference, that, in the case of the body, there comes a time when the best of food will not arrest decay; whereas the effect of the Holy Eucharist is uninterrupted growth, unto that hour when the veils are removed. For the Holy Eucharist unites man to Christ. But such union, though it exists the moment that the soul receives sanctifying grace, is susceptible of increase and diminution in two ways; by the greater or less intensity and frequency of acts, especially of that of charity, and by the greater or less extent to which charity prompts, directs, and controls all the varied activity of man’s nature. There is no

¹ Ps. xxii. 5.

⁴ III., q. 79, a. 2.

² III., qu. 73, a. 6.

⁵ Sess. xiii., cap. 8.

³ John vi. 52.

limit to such growth as this. Such growth is what spiritual writers call progress in perfection. Perfection, therefore, is principally and properly the effect of the Holy Eucharist.

3. *Repair*.—In every living thing there are causes at work, or influences to be apprehended, which diminish vitality; which wear away the tissues, lessen the elasticity of the walls of the arteries, obstruct the nerve filaments, and so injure heart, brain, and other organs. The work of repair is, first, the making good the damage, and, secondly, the making it less possible in the future. In the spiritual economy waste and damage come under three heads; habits of sin (even after sin is forgiven)—such habits being really more or less strong propensities to pride, avarice, sensuality and other kinds of sinfulness; the natural propension to sin in all its branches; and the venial sins which, chiefly in consequence of these inclinations, we fall into daily. The Holy Eucharist forgives venial sins; that is, it takes away their guilt and their punishment (except in the case of those we knowingly cling to and will not repent of); and it does this by the quickening and fierceness of the act of charity, which unites us to God, and, like a fire, at the same time dries up the petty greennesses and moisture which militate against heat and dryness. The same intensity of charity diminishes all evil propension; for all acts, and especially strong acts, weaken the opposite habit. Moreover, the Holy Eucharist seems to have a special grace for the bodily passions. These passions are not exclusively corporeal, but they are attached to or located in a bodily organ. Hence their violence largely depends upon bodily conditions. It is the express teaching of the Fathers that the Eucharistic contact not only affects the passions indirectly, through the graces which are conveyed to the soul, but has also a directly healing and sanctifying effect upon the flesh. We find St. Cyril of Jerusalem saying that the “Bread of heaven and the chalice of salvation sanctify the soul

and the body.”¹ It seems indeed fitting that the presence of the most pure of all humanities—the second Adam in all His unsullied integrity—should exercise the royal prerogative of restoring to men, when He visits them in His own Sacrament, some portion at least of the original integrity of the first Adam, in order that, as the Church says, “the heart and the flesh may blossom again in the vigour of purity and chastity” (*ut refloreat cor et caro vigore pudicitiae et castimoniae*); in order that it may be granted to us, in some degree, to live as the Angels live (*angelicis moribus vivere*). This influence of the Holy Eucharist is also considered to impart to the body a special grace making it worthy of a glorious resurrection. Suarez cites a great many of the Fathers to this effect.² For in Holy Communion the body of the communicant becomes in a certain sense the body of Christ, so intimate is the union of body to body; and Christ most fittingly exercises a special solicitude over the flesh which has been so closely united with His own. This repairing power of the Holy Eucharist as to soul and as to body is of the utmost consequence in the spiritual life. As St. Thomas says, “Our warfare is continuous from day to day, and unless we sometimes partook of food, our spiritual life would vanish—*vita spiritualis in nobis evanesceret*.”³

4. *Delight.* No effect of the Holy Communion is more frequently insisted on than that spiritual delight and holy inebriation which accompany it. As Pope Urban IV. says in his eloquent and fervent Bull: “This august and venerable Sacrament has in it all delightfulness and the pleasantness of every savour, and there is tasted therein the sweetness of our Lord Himself”. Or, to cite the magistral words of St. Thomas: “The effect of this Sacrament is that the soul is spiritually fed and

¹ 4 *Mystag. Cat.*, n. 5.

² *Disp.*, 64, sect. 2.

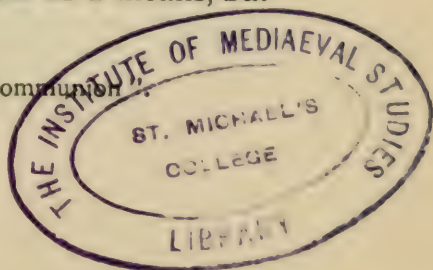
³ IV., *Dist.*, xii., qu. 3, a. 2, sol. 1.

refreshed, by virtue of the spiritual exhilaration therein conveyed, and of a kind of 'delightful attraction' exercised by God's goodness".¹ We must note that this joy and pleasure in Holy Communion by no means necessarily imply any impression on the senses. Sensible sweetness does sometimes accompany the reception of our Lord's sacred Body and Blood. It is a grace of God, and a favour of His beneficent hand, given for wise purposes, and more frequently to beginners in spiritual experience. But what these authorities refer to is a delight which is entirely spiritual. Spiritual delight is nothing else but the ease, swiftness and completeness of the act of Charity. Just as a person in a state of joyful excitement throws hesitation aside, puts forth his strength, and laughs at obstacles, so, after Communion, the worthy recipient is strongly drawn to Christ and to divine things; his heart goes out towards his Saviour in solid acts of love, contrition and oblation; difficulties are hardly felt; and he is ready to make any sacrifices whatsoever. This is the sweetness, the joy, the inebriation caused by the Holy Eucharist in the soul. Therefore is it compared by saints and doctors to the most delicious bread, to honey, to the marrow of wheat, and to the wine that maketh glad the heart of man.

These admirable effects of the Eucharist do not always accompany its reception. They depend in large measure on our own dispositions and exertions. It is true that a state of grace, accompanied by a right and pious intention, suffices to secure good and desirable fruit from Communion.² But for the attainment of that fervour of charity which is the actual grace of Holy Communion, certain dispositions of the heart are required besides a state of grace. These dispositions are required, it will be well understood, not as a means, but

¹ III., qu. 79, a. 1, ad. 2.

² See the chapter on "Frequent Communion".



as a condition. The dispositions simply remove obstacles; the grace comes from the Sacrament.

The dispositions thus required are named by St. Thomas "great devotion and reverence".¹ Devotion, in St. Thomas's teaching, means a firm will and desire to love and please God. Reverence signifies that exercise of the holy gift of fear which acknowledges the holiness of Jesus and the sinfulness of His servant. Thus, the disposition for Holy Communion should include the actual exercise of spiritual acts of humility, contrition, adoration, desire, and love. The more intense such acts are, the more fully is the fruit of Holy Communion realised in the soul of the communicant. But even when such acts are weak and remiss, the bounty of our Lord in the Sacrament of His love is unspeakable. It does not take much, especially where there is simplicity and goodwill, to let loose the mighty floods of the Sacrament.

The effects of the Sacrament of the Eucharist may continue to accumulate as long as the sacred species remain unconsumed. As far as the "habitual" effect is concerned, it takes place, in a worthily disposed recipient, the moment the sacramental reception is fully verified. If the communicant's good dispositions increase, this effect will increase as long as Christ is present. So with the actual graces which the bounty of the Sacred Heart brings with It. As long as the species remain, and actual devotion is kept up, so long will these graces multiply, in proportion to the fervour of the recipient.

It is not difficult, on these considerations, to understand how the Holy Communion remits sin. Mortal sin, it need not be said, is not intended to be remitted by this sacrament. The faithful Christian is bound to be free from mortal sin before he approaches. By a positive law of the Church, all mortal sins must be in-

¹ *Magna devotio et reverentia*, III., qu. 80, art. 10.

dividually confessed, wherever this is possible, before Communion can be allowed. It is true, however, that a person in mortal sin who communicated without adverting to this, and at the same time without adhesion of the heart to such sin, and with (at least) imperfect sorrow, would receive justifying grace by Holy Communion.

Holy Communion remits venial sin, not directly as by the power of absolution, but indirectly, by the medium of those acts of charity which it excites in the heart. Such acts of the love of God include, as it need not be pointed out, a virtual retractation or detestation of our venial sins. If any were excluded definitely from this implicit sorrow, it would not be washed away. The pious Christian who makes his daily or frequent Communion should take great comfort in the purifying effect of that divine participation. Mortal sins, by the grace of God, he seldom or never commits. But he is naturally distressed by the continually repeated lesser sins and defects of his life; by the vanity, temper, self-seeking and disingenuousness that spot and stain the fabric of his daily existence. All these faults and imperfections, may be, and generally are, entirely washed away, both as to guilt and punishment, by a fairly fervent Communion. This is what the Catechism means when it quotes St. Ambrose as calling the Holy Eucharist "Daily Bread, received for the removal of daily infirmity".¹ The devout communicant may look forward to a short Purgatory.

The temporal punishment due to sin—whether to mortal sin which has been forgiven, or to venial sin—is also remitted in this indirect way, that is, by the good and supernatural acts which the soul is roused to make. These acts are not only meritorious, but have also the value of satisfaction, like all the acts that the

¹*De Sacram.*, l. iv., cap. 6; but it is not certain that this work is by St. Ambrose.

Christian heart lifts up under the influence of the grace of Jesus Christ.

We have here, moreover, a justification of a practice of which many good Catholics are fond—the offering up of one's Communion for a friend. It is true that when we receive a Sacrament, we cannot transfer or hand over the sacramental grace. But, in the first place, the Holy Communion is a most meritorious act of religion, which we can offer to Almighty God as a suffrage for the living and the dead. Secondly, Holy Communion is a moment when our acts of "impetration" or intercession are especially intense and profitable. To pray for our friends, therefore, at such a time is to afford them special help.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON FREQUENT COMMUNION.

THE Holy Eucharist, wonderful gift of God as it is, is not held by the Catholic Church to be a Sacrament which is absolutely necessary for salvation. That is, absolutely speaking, the soul of man can attain the Beatific Vision even if the Blessed Sacrament has never been received during mortal life. All that is needed for admission to the bliss of Heaven is the sanctifying grace of our most holy Redeemer; and this can be conferred by Baptism, by the Sacrament of Penance, or even under certain circumstances by acts of contrition alone. The Fathers, and especially St. Augustine, speak of Baptism as implying or supposing a desire to receive the Holy Eucharist. That Sacrament is, no doubt, in the traditional Catholic view, the natural means of increasing and perfecting that spiritual life which begins by Baptism. But the spiritual life itself is not absolutely dependent upon it.

At the same time it is the indisputable teaching of the Church that, for those who have come to the use of reason, the participation of the Holy Eucharist is a divine precept. We cannot but see a divine command in these words of our Lord: "Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye shall not have life in you"¹—compared with the words which follow the institution: "This do ye in memory of Me". For

¹ St. John, vi. 54.

the Holy Eucharist has been instituted by our Saviour in order to strengthen human frailty and to preserve and increase sanctifying grace. It is, in the ordinary Providence of God, morally necessary for perseverance, and for salvation. Any man who voluntarily abstained from it altogether would certainly, as a fact, fall into mortal sin. "Through our natural concupiscence," says St. Thomas, "and through our being so taken up with external things, there ensues a constant diminishing of that devotion and fervour which should keep us near to God; and therefore it is essential that such loss be frequently made good, or else a man will be wholly alienated from God".¹ Hence the holy Doctor concludes that man is bound to receive this Sacrament, not only by the law of the Church, but by the command of our Lord.²

The divine precept of Holy Communion, although it binds every man, evidently does not bind all in the same degree. Its urgency will depend on many circumstances; on a man's disposition, surroundings and temptations, and on the character of the times in which he lives. It will naturally be especially obligatory at the hour of death—that hour when weakness is so great, and temptation so strong.

The Church, on her part, in order to secure at least a qualified compliance with the command of Christ, has formulated a precept by which the faithful are bound to approach Holy Communion at least once a year, and that during what is called the Paschal time. The first general Council that promulgated this canon of Easter Communion was the fourth Council of Lateran (1215). It was renewed by the Council of Trent.³ Before the Council of Lateran there does not

¹ "Ex concupiscentia innatâ et occupatione circa exteriora fit deperditio devotionis et fervoris secundum quæ homo in Deum colligitur, unde oportet quod pluries deperdita restaurentur, ne homo totaliter alienetur a Deo." IV., *Dist.*, 12, qu. 3, a. 1, sol. 1.

² III., qu. 80, art. 11.

³ Sess. xiii., Can. 9.

seem to have been any universal ecclesiastical law on the subject. It is certain that the Communion of all who assisted at the Eucharistic Liturgy was the rule in Apostolic times—and probably down to the fourth century. But it is not clear that this was obligatory—although such considerable authorities as Baronius and Bingham have maintained that it was. We do not find any trace of an ecclesiastical precept before the fifth century. In one of the canons attributed to St. Patrick (431 to 437) there occur the words, "He who communicates not in the night of Easter cannot be counted among the faithful". There are many local canons, from the fifth to the thirteenth century, enjoining Holy Communion three, or sometimes four, times a year; that is at Easter, at Pentecost, at Christmas, and sometimes also on Maundy Thursday.

The question of the frequency of Communion, quite apart from obligation, has been recently so decisively treated by the Holy See that the controversy which for many centuries has gone on in regard to the dispositions required for frequent and daily Communion is now authoritatively set at rest.¹

We may lay it down as certain that the Church, in her official capacity, has always desired that the faithful should approach the Holy Table frequently, and even at every Mass at which they were present. The Communion of all present was the custom, as we have seen, if not the obligatory rule, up to the end of the third century. In the time of St. Augustine († 430) Communion at every Mass was also certainly the rule, although it was recognised not to be of obligation. St. Augustine thus writes to a correspondent:² [You tell me] that some one has said that the Eucharist is not to be taken every day; you asked him, Why—and he replied, Because a man should choose those days on

¹ Decree of the S. Congregation of the Council, Dec. 24, 1905.

² *Ep.*, liv., *Ad Yannarium*.

which his life and conduct are more pure and continent, in order thus to approach so great a Sacrament worthily; for he that eateth unworthily, eateth judgment to himself. Another man would say, on the contrary, Nay, if a man is so sinful, and his spiritual health is so affected, that this great medicine must be for the moment abstained from, such a man should be warned from the altar by the Bishop and made to do penance, and reconciled in due course. For unworthy reception is when a man receives at the time that he ought to be doing penance; not when he uses his free judgment as to approaching or abstaining. But if a man's sins are not so great as to merit excommunication, he ought not to separate himself from the daily medicine of the Lord's Body. Perhaps the right way to decide the controversy between these two views would be to advise both to abide in the peace of Christ, and to act, each of them, as in all good faith he piously believes he ought to act. Neither of them dishonours the Body and Blood of the Lord; both to the best of their power intend to promote the honour of this most salutary sacrament." After illustrating his words by a reference to Zacchæus and to the Manna of the desert, the holy Doctor goes on: "It is honour (reverence) that makes the one not dare to receive daily; it is equally honour that makes the other not dare even one day to abstain. This sacred Food must not be treated with dishonour (contempt)—that is all; just as the Manna was not to be treated with disgust."

In this interesting passage, sins which subject the offender to excommunication are what are now called in Catholic theology "mortal" sins. One who is guilty of such sins cannot approach Holy Communion without repentance and "reconciliation"—which implies confession. It is clear that for all persons not lying under such sins as these, daily Communion was optional, and was welcomed and expected by the Church. Perhaps, instead of "daily" Communion, it would be more correct

to say Communion at every Mass. In Rome, up to the time of St. Gregory the Great, it is uncertain how far Mass was publicly celebrated on ordinary days other than Sundays and festivals.¹ Yet in other Churches we seem to have undoubted evidence that from the earliest times Mass was celebrated every day. St. Cyprian, in the third century, speaks of himself and his fellow-priests "celebrating the Sacrifice to God daily".² St. Augustine, speaking of Easter, says that Christ is immolated in the Sacrament before the people not only on that great feast, but every day.³

When we try to compare primitive Christian practice in the matter of approaching the Holy Communion with later times, we must always bear in mind certain considerations in regard to the ecclesiastical discipline of those days. First of all, up to the conversion of the Empire, and much later, Baptism was not, as a rule, conferred till late in life, or until the catechumen could be depended upon. Baptised persons, in those early days, were not expected to sin grievously, and hence there was a presumption that all the "faithful" who were present at Mass would be in a state to receive Communion. As for those baptised persons who did fall into grievous sin, they were excommunicated and subjected to public penance, if their sin was public; if their sins were secret, even so they had to bring them to the priest and to do canonical penance which, as need not be said, included suspension from the sacred mysteries. Under the term "secret" sins, there can be no doubt that we must include even sins against the ninth and tenth commandments.⁴ But in regard to sins of mere desire and of thought, there can be no doubt

¹ See Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, p. 230. Thurston, *Lent and Holy Week*, p. 152.

² *Epist.*, 4, iv.

³ *Epist.*, xxiii.

⁴ The Council of Trent has declared that "the *universal* Church has *always* understood that the *integral* confession of sins was instituted by our Lord, and is by divine law necessary" (for the lapsed). *De Pœnitentia*, cap. 5.

that in those days there was comparatively less realisation than there has come to be in later times. That is, a certain inadvertence, arising from a much less acute self-consciousness and a less delicate sensibility, would more often cause such sins to be less than grave, and would also obliterate the memory of them in the mind. Thus, in the early centuries, gross and open sinners would be forbidden to approach, whilst a good many others, vaguely sorry for mental guilt, would not advert to the need of confession.

But when the populations of Europe were crowding into the Church, it was quickly recognised that the paternal vigilance illustrated by the discipline of canonical penance, could no longer be maintained. The distinction between the bad and the good in the flock could only be kept up as a formality. Hence the Pastor, in giving up the old penal discipline, actually reduced the comparative number of communicants. As he could not discipline the sinners, he felt it useless, from a practical point of view, to try to confess them, and as he could not confess them, there was a disposition to close the Holy Table to them—and not without reason.

There seems to be good evidence, however, that weekly Communion was expected, and even practised down to the middle of the ninth century.¹ In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, St. Gilbert of Sempringham's lay-brothers received only eight times a year; the nuns of St. Clare, only six times; the cloistered nuns of St. Dominic, only fifteen times; the third order of St. Dominic, only four times. St. Louis received Holy Communion six times a year, St. Elizabeth of Portugal, three times. In the tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Communions of the faithful, excluding the monasteries, were undoubtedly rare. This fact has puzzled many Catholic writers. How is it, they

¹ See Dalgairns, *Holy Communion*, p. 226.

say, that the period when the faith was strongest and the Catholic Church most supreme, precisely coincides with the period when the practice of Holy Communion was most infrequent? My own opinion is, that a phenomenon which is at first sight so startling was occasioned by more than one cause. It is very unscientific to join together in identical generalisations all the centuries that elapsed between Pope St. Gregory the Great and Pope Leo X. But there were three causes at work during the whole of that time, although under varying circumstances, which somewhat explain the rareness of Holy Communion. One was, as I have said, the cessation of the canonical penances, combined with the long lingering of the persuasion that penance for mortal sin must still be lengthy and severe. Another was the gradual development of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. It seems paradoxical to adduce this as a cause of less frequent Communion. But it is certain that the early Christians did not look on the Blessed Sacrament with that devout and tender love, or give it that elaborate and reverential *cultus* to which we are now accustomed. Devotion, as we should call it, to the Blessed Sacrament grew and developed during the middle ages; devotion as distinguished from use. The institution of the festival of Corpus Christi in the thirteenth century marked a stage in this development with which we are all familiar. But, in reality, every century from the eighth to the twentieth distinctly shows a greater and greater expansion of the Christian apprehension of this greatest of all Christian dispensations. It was a necessary consequence, especially at first, that there should be a deepening of reverential fear. At the time, and under the circumstances, this was providential and salutary. But the effect of a gradually deepening reverence was for a long time less frequent Communion on the part of the laity. Then, thirdly, there was, as I have said, the more acute consciousness of sin. The personal sense of the sinfulness

of sin grew steadily as the Pagan ideals of human life were effaced by the spread of a more and more personal love of God. Consciences were more diligently searched, and the necessity of confession more earnestly realised. Thus Holy Communion became more of a labour and a business than it had been in the more simple days of a by-gone time.

Perhaps it must be admitted that, during the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the worldliness of the clergy and the insecurity and disorder attending the feudal system, had a great deal to do with the infrequency of Communion. But it cannot be right to attribute wholly, during four centuries, such a fact as the seeming neglect of the Blessed Sacrament to the bad clergy or to social conditions. This was the very central period of the Ages of Faith. It was the Saints and the Masters of Theology themselves who, to a large extent, enjoined and practised that which seems so lamentable and inexplicable. There must be, it would seem, some sound Catholic principle, not yet perhaps fully developed or perfectly balanced, to account for such a lasting and widespread state of things. It is thus the Church grows from generation to generation, and works out the splendour of her doctrine and the sanctity of her practice. What seems backwardness and remissness to us may frequently have been in a former century true progress and relative excellence. The history of the Blessed Sacrament is not the history of one age; it has filled, and is to fill with its growth and its power, every one of the world's epochs, and in each of them it has been, as it is to be, the Church's chief treasure and the life of the Christian soul.

It is towards the end of the fourteenth century that we come upon the first strong and decided signs of a return to that custom or use of Holy Communion which had been temporarily traversed by the very growth of a worship and reverence which the Blessed Sacrament, in the course of ages, was sure to challenge for itself.

It came from the Order of St. Dominic, and the names that show in the front of the movement are those of Eckart, Tauler, St. Vincent Ferrer, and Savonarola. Some of these great reformers were not free from errors and mistakes. But Eckart submitted like a child, and corrected himself; and Savonarola, whatever he said of persons, certainly was a faithful Catholic and more. The following century, the fifteenth, was distinguished by deep unbelief and depravity on the one hand, and a splendid Catholic revival on the other. The histories of St. Lidwina, St. Catherine of Genoa, St. Colette and other Saints testify to the growing frequency of Communion. The sixteenth century brought the so-called Reformation; and it also brought St. Teresa, St. Ignatius and St. Philip to preach and spread the practice of frequent Communion. The seventeenth century saw the first pronouncement of the Holy See on this subject. The Decree of the Congregation of the Council, confirmed by Pope Innocent XI. (Feb. 12, 1679) laid down that no one was to be prevented from communicating even if he approached every day; that no rule could be given as to days for communicating or days for abstaining from Communion; and that Bishops and pastors should do their utmost to secure in all who communicated the most pious and fervent dispositions.

This decree of Pope Innocent was directed against two opposite extremes. Antoine Arnauld (1612-94) in his celebrated book *De la fréquente Communion* taught that no one should be permitted to approach Holy Communion unless (1) he had done penance for all his sins, and (2) he was sure he had a perfectly pure love of God. Other rigorists would have rejected altogether from the Holy Table certain states and conditions of life. On the other hand, at this very time we find theologians expressing the view that daily Communion, or Communion at every Mass, was of obligation. The decree must be read by the light of

the contemporary circumstances I have described. Its general effect was to vindicate frequent and even daily Communion as a practice desired by the Church, and allowed to Christians of every condition, and as the right of all who were properly disposed; and at the same time to condemn the view that daily Communion, or any fixed number of Communions, could be asserted to be of precept.

The two great masters of the spiritual life who have exercised the greatest influence on the practice of frequent Communion from the middle of the seventeenth century to the present day are St. Francis of Sales and St. Alphonsus. The former expresses his opinion in various passages of his works, but nowhere more distinctly than in the following: "To communicate every week, one must be free from mortal sin, and from all affection to venial sin, and have a great desire of Communion; but to communicate daily, it is necessary, in addition to this, to have surmounted the greater part of our evil inclinations, and to have the consent of our spiritual father".¹ The views of St. Alphonsus may be conveniently presented in the directions issued by the late Father General, Father Nicholas Mauron, to the Redemptorist Congregation in 1865. Having first made a distinction between weekly Communion (which was everywhere regularly to be permitted), this instruction proceeds:—

"As regards *frequent* Communion, that is Communion several times a week, St. Alphonsus requires three conditions: (1) the avoidance of all fully deliberate venial sin and freedom from all affection to any venial sin whatsoever; (2) the pursuit of perfection and the sincere desire of receiving Communion in order to increase the fire of the love of God; (3) the practice of mental prayer and assiduous mortification of the senses and passions.

¹ *Introduction à la vie dévote*, part. 2, ch. 20.

"For *daily* Communion our holy Founder requires that the soul have overcome in great part its passions and desires, that it apply itself strenuously to mental prayer and mortification, and that it have attained a greater or less degree of perfection. Even so he exhorts directors to disallow Communion on one day in each week."

Lehmkuhl give rules somewhat similar.¹ He sums up his views thus:—

"Frequent Communion, that is not daily, but on Sundays and festivals and once or twice a week besides, requires a person to be so disposed that deliberate venial sin does not habitually occur—that such sin is not an ordinary thing, and, besides, that an attempt be made to root out evil inclinations, and that there be a desire of progress in virtue. In other words, there must be serious advancement in what is called the purgative way, together with an attempt to enter the illuminative.

"Daily Communion requires not only the serious attempt to fight against evil inclinations, but considerable success in the extirpation of such inclinations; and, moreover, a really serious attempt to take up Christian perfection and the imitation of Christ in the full sense, and especially in His poverty, lowliness and patience; in brief, serious progress and the fervent desire of advancing daily in the illuminative and unitive ways."

The idea of theologians like Lehmkuhl evidently was that such rules were required by two important con-

¹ *Theol. Mor.*, vol. ii., 10th ed., §§ 156-157 and note. The rules for allowing Holy Communion laid down by this eminent moralist have had the distinction of being approved by a Roman Congregation. The Congregation of Propaganda, having been asked by the Vicar Apostolic of Madagascar about Father Lehmkuhl's rules, replied, 25th May, 1892, that it had examined them and found them, in substance, worthy of approbation; but that they were not to be regarded as an absolute and definitive law, but as a direction (*norma*) for the use of confessors.

siderations. First, it was at least a venial sin of irreverence frequently to approach Holy Communion, the fount of all purity, under the guilt of many venial sins, some of them actually cherished. Next, such a Communion was hurtful to the communicant, for, as Lehmkuhl says, "to approach with tepidity is less profitable than to approach less frequently, indeed, but with the greater fervour and reverence on that very account". The fruit of Holy Communion is produced, no doubt, *ex opere operato*, but it is adjusted to the dispositions of the recipient. Hence theologians advised greater or less restriction, according to their views and temperaments.

In the discussions which have recently taken place on this subject we may perhaps discern traces of that "rigorism" which has in many parts of the Church survived the Jansenist heresy. Speaking of this, Pope Pius X. says: "The poison of Jansenism which under the specious cover of zeal for the honour and reverence of the Eucharist had infected even the good, has not completely disappeared. The dispute as to the dispositions required for the due and lawful frequentation of Communion has survived the declarations of the Holy See; and hence it has come about that some theologians, even some of excellent repute, have laid it down that daily Communion can be allowed only rarely and with many conditions."¹

It is some forty years ago that Father Joseph Frassinetti strongly argued that for daily Communion no other disposition is required than the state of grace.² He refused to believe, he said, that "any harm" could come to a person who communicated every day without further disposition than habitually living without grievous sin. Whenever a Christian thus approached, the grace of the Holy Eucharist was given to his soul—that is, an increase of sanctifying grace, and, as a

¹ Decree of December 24th, 1905.

² *Compendio della Teologia morale*, vol. ii, trattato 15, dissert. 10.

consequence, growth in the love of God and in the virtues connected therewith. As for the objection drawn from want of reverence, he considered that it proved too much ; it would prove that Christians should approach the Blessed Sacrament very rarely indeed. He thought that no Christian who habitually avoids mortal sin would ever present himself at the Holy Table without "some little" preparation, or leave without thanksgiving. True, there ought to be devotion and reverence. But it was not to be revered, but to be loved, that Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist. As long as a man is in a state of grace, he is, substantially, in a state of reverence. Therefore Father Frassinetti plainly said that he could not agree either with St. Alphonsus or with St. Francis of Sales, when they counsel abstinence, once a week, in order to show reverence. Thus, whilst by no means asserting that every Christian, as long as he is in grace, should communicate daily, but leaving each case to the decision of a confessor, he urged that daily Communion should be much more easily allowed than it was.

This was a view of daily Communion which, as we have seen, was not thoroughly accepted by professors of theology and directors of conscience. But it can hardly be denied that considerations like those indicated above have had a decided effect upon modern teaching and practice, and that even such masters as St. Francis of Sales and St. Alphonsus have been more or less superseded. The latest utterance of the Holy See decidedly confirms the teaching of Frassinetti.

The Sacred Congregation of the Council published the Decree "On daily Communion" to which reference has already been made, on December 24th, 1905. It is a document of the first importance and forms a law by which Theologians and Confessors will henceforth have to guide themselves in theory and in practice.

The Decree begins by citing the well-known passage of the Council of Trent, in which the wish is expressed that at every Mass the faithful who assist should re-

ceive sacramentally. This, the Decree declares, certainly agrees with the desire of our Lord Himself in the institution of the Sacrament; daily reception, not principally that Christ may be honoured, or that a pious soul may reap the reward of its piety, but in order that the faithful, by union with God, may receive strength to overcome concupiscence, to expiate the lighter faults of daily occurrence, and to avoid grave sins. The early Christians received every day. But piety decreased, and afterwards the Jansenist heresy caused disputes to arise about the dispositions necessary for frequent Communion, one party placing every difficulty in the way, whilst on the other side some went so far as to assert a divine precept for daily reception. The poison of Jansenism was not entirely expelled from the Church even by the action of the Sovereign Pontiffs Innocent XI. and Alexander VIII. Even theologians of good repute refused to allow daily Communion except to a few and under numerous conditions. "Others, however, distinguished for learning and piety, made it more easy to practise a custom so saving and so acceptable to God, teaching, on the authority of the Fathers, that there was no precept of the Church requiring better dispositions for daily than for weekly or monthly Communion." The Decree goes on to state that there has been increased discussion on this subject at the present day, not without some accompanying bitterness. Confessors were disturbed, the faithful were troubled, and piety suffered. Hence the Holy See had been asked to set the matter at rest.

The following is the substance of what is decreed. Frequent and daily Communion must be considered to be the right of all the faithful of whatever state or condition of life; so that no one can be prevented from so communicating frequently or daily, provided he is in the state of grace and approaches the Holy Table with a right and pious disposition of mind. Such a "right and pious disposition" the Decree defines to consist in this

—that Communion should be approached not through custom, or vanity or human motives, but with the desire of obeying the will of God, of becoming more closely united to God by charity, and of making use of that divine medicine as a remedy for one's weaknesses and defects. It is not necessary even for daily Communion that one should be free from venial sin, even such as is deliberate, or from affection thereto. This indeed were earnestly to be desired; but all that is necessary is freedom from mortal sin with a firm purpose not to sin gravely any more. It is true that the Sacraments of the New Law, although they produce their effects *ex opere operato*, are more effective in proportion to the good dispositions of the recipient; and therefore care should be taken that diligent preparation should precede Holy Communion and that a suitable thanksgiving should follow. In order that frequent and daily Communion may be practised more prudently and with more abundant merit, the advice of a Confessor should be made use of; but Confessors must not turn away (*avertant*) even from daily Communion any one who is in the state of grace and in the dispositions named above. Finally, all parish priests, confessors and preachers are directed to promote with repeated and zealous admonition the practice of frequent and daily Communion, in accordance with the well-known passage of the Roman Catechism.¹ This passage runs as follows: "Whether it is better to communicate every month, or every week, or every day, no hard and fast rule can be laid down for all. But St. Augustine's maxim (*norma*) is most secure.—*So live that you may be able to receive daily.* It will therefore be the part of the Parish Priest frequently to exhort the faithful that, as it is considered needful every day to feed the body, so also they should not neglect every day to feed and nourish the soul with this Sacrament; for the soul, it is evident,

¹ Part 2, ch. iv., no. 60.

stands not less in need of spiritual food than the body of corporal."

It must not be lost sight of, however, that this Decree, which prohibits all ecclesiastical writers henceforth from engaging in controversy on this subject, leaves the penitent still in the hands of the Confessor. The Confessor is directed not to demand more than he should, but the penitent must not make use of frequent or daily Communion without consulting him; and he will know how to find out whether it is a good and holy motive that leads him to wish for Communion, or whether it is vainglory, mere custom, human respect, or some other human and "natural" impulse. The great point that the Decree decides is that no "special" dispositions are required for daily Communion more than for weekly, and that all that is required is freedom from mortal sin; not all that could be desired, but all that is required.

The practical result of this Decree will undoubtedly be to make Holy Communion more frequent, and daily Communion more common. There will no longer be the same anxiety on the part of some Confessors to prevent their penitents from communicating on account of the ordinary small sins of daily life. Good and pious people are often very imperfect—they are lazy at getting up in the morning, they sometimes miss their night and morning prayers, they eat and drink too much, they tell small lies, they are unkind to those about them, they indulge in petty vanity, they are bad tempered, they are impertinent to parents or superiors, they are uncharitable to the poor, they are too fond of money. All these and similar deficiencies, whilst they may be far from grave sins, may at the same time be more or less deliberate, and therefore more or less sinful. Confessors, and Catholic theologians, and the flock, have very generally looked upon easy-going people of this kind as persons to be forbidden daily Communion, or even Communion more than once a

week. It may be thought that it is not very probable that penitents of this kind will want to approach daily. But among young persons, unoccupied women, women living in community, seminarists and others, there is not unfrequently found that combination of moral deficiency with religious excitation which prevents them from taking a sufficiently serious view of Holy Communion—and it is not impossible that some of these might demand daily Communion. Are they to be kept back? There is also the case of those who, as the Confessor clearly sees, are contracting, through the frequency of their Communions, a habit of irreverence towards our Lord. Is it right that the Confessor should, in their regard, still hold to that rule which is as old as St. Thomas, and indeed as St. Augustine, and make them abstain from time to time merely to preserve and deepen their reverence, even when they are altogether free from mortal sin?

To reply to these questions we must bear in mind the instructions of the Holy See. Confessors are directed not to keep from Communion, even daily, persons who, on the one hand, are free from mortal sin, and firmly resolved not to sin again, and on the other are actuated by the “right spirit” in approaching, *viz.*, by a desire to obey the will of God, a wish to be more closely united to God, and an intention or purpose to use the divine medicine of the Holy Eucharist as a remedy for passion and frailty. Speculatively speaking, the imperfect persons described above might still be moved to seek Communion by these holy motives. Practically any Confessor knows that this would not often be the case. Instead, there would be sure to be either the vanity of appearing pious, jealousy of companions, the anxiety to secure the esteem of superiors or the priest, or mere routine. Under such circumstances the Confessor would be fully within his rights, and would only be doing his duty, in preventing daily Communion.

With regard to "reverence," it would also appear that although a (venial) deficiency of reverence, or the fact of decreasing reverence, is not necessarily incompatible with a beneficial reception of Holy Communion, yet, practically speaking, a confessor would be right, as a rule, in trying to remedy such a faulty disposition even by prohibiting daily Communion. What does "want of reverence" imply? It implies a defective sense of the majesty of God, and of one's own sinfulness and unworthiness. But such a disposition is hardly reconcilable with any of the three elements of the "right spirit" just described. On the other hand, it would afford just grounds for suspecting the existence of one or other of those imperfect motives which, in the judgment of the Holy See, ought to bar daily Communion. This result is the more certainly to be apprehended because wherever there is a spirit of irreverence, or the gradually increasing torpor of the holy gift of fear, the fatal blight of religious indifference settles more or less rapidly on the soul, and the worthy motives required by the Holy See become more and more uncertain, and more and more difficult of recognition.

The question whether the instruction of the Holy See requires any "actual devotion" in those using daily Communion may be answered on similar principles. Any one who brings to Holy Communion the desire to accomplish God's will, to unite himself to God and to heal his soul by the Body of Christ, has actual devotion. Even if these acts of the will are not exercised at the moment of reception, they must have been realised before, and must not have been retracted, or superseded by lapse of time. Sensible devotion is not, and never has been, required. Devotion, in its essence, is a matter of the rational will, moved by the grace of God.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE.

THE Council of Trent thus defines: "If any one shall say that in the Mass there is not offered to God a true and proper Sacrifice; or that the phrase 'to be offered' merely means that Christ is given to us as food (*ad manducandum*), let him be anathema".¹

It is a statement commonly made by Anglicans that there is no trace in the earlier Christian centuries that the Eucharist was held to be a Sacrifice in any proper sense; that is, in any other sense than a Sacrifice of prayer and praise, or at most of bread and wine. This view is gradually being surrendered by the more learned students of antiquity. It is not difficult to point to dozens of passages, even in the second and third centuries, which can hardly be construed unless you take them to mean a sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ.

The *Didache*, or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, is an authority dating from the end of the first century. In that curious monument we can see plainly the existence of a Liturgy. That Liturgy is the Eucharistic rite. To that rite the word *θυσία* is applied. This by itself might not prove much. But the text goes on to refer in these words to the celebrated prophecy of Malachy: "for that (sacrifice) is the same as that spoken of by the

¹ Sess. xxii., Can. i.

Lord, In every place and time to offer to Me a pure oblation.”¹ The words are quoted with textual identity from Malachy i. 11, in the Septuagint version. The words *καθαρὰ θυσία* are a technical phrase. The sacrifice here named is considered by the majority of commentators to mean—not a sacrifice of praise and prayer merely—but an external sensible act, signifying the most profound homage to God. The writer of the *Didache*, therefore, says as much as this—that the Eucharistic rite was that *καθαρὰ θυσία* prophesied by Malachy—that external sensible rite which was to prevail everywhere and to all time in the Christian ages.

St Justin († 167), in the *Dialogue with Tryphon*, uses the same word, and refers to the same text. “God pronounces all those Sacrifices to be agreeable to Him which are offered in His name, the Sacrifices that Jesus Christ has taught us to offer”—that is to say, as he proceeds to explain, “the Sacrifice that is called the Eucharist, and which is prepared with bread and wine; that Sacrifice which the Christians offer in all places of the world”.² An opponent might point out that this was probably no more than a Sacrifice of bread and wine. It has been shown already that Justin calls the Holy Eucharist simply “the Body and Blood of the Lord”. But, without insisting upon that, we must observe that Justin, like the *Didache*, undoubtedly considers the Eucharistic Sacrifice to be the *θυσία*, the *καθαρὰ θυσία* of Malachy. At all events, in his opinion, it is more than a sacrifice of prayer and praise; for it is the Eucharistic *rite*. And, according to his witness, this sacrifice is already universal among Christians.

If we pass to St. Irenæus, we find a still stronger parallel assertion. St. Irenæus assures us that “Jesus Christ, in consecrating the bread and the wine, has taught us a new oblation which the Church, receiving from the Apostles, offers to God all the world over”.

¹ Ch. xiv.

² *Ibid.* 116-17; Migne, P. G., vi. 745-49.

He then refers by name to Malachy—and concludes “the ancient people hath ceased to sacrifice to God; but in every place is sacrifice offered to God, and pure sacrifice”.¹ We may observe then that St. Irenæus pronounces the Eucharist to be a Sacrifice, and an Apostolic institution, and a universal institution, fulfilling the prophecy of Malachy. This must be the outward and sensible rite of consecration, and not any mere offering of prayer and praise.

The witness of Tertullian is very remarkable. We find him stating “Itaque et sacrificamus pro salute imperatoris, sed Deo nostro et ipsius”.² Women, in his words, are not permitted “either to teach in the Church, or to baptise, or to offer”.³ Among the reasons for which women may leave their homes and go forth in public, he enumerates the occasion when “aut sacrificium offertur aut verbum Dei administratur”.⁴ And he speaks of Holy Communion as “participatio sacrificii”.⁵ It is in the book *Against Marcion*⁶ that he refers to the prophecy of Malachy.

We have therefore, in Tertullian, the Holy Eucharist as a rite called, absolutely, a sacrifice; not a kind of sacrifice; nor a sacrifice under certain circumstances; nor an internal sacrifice, as that of the heart; but a sacrifice, just as the pagans called their immolations sacrifices; and withal, in the fulfilment of the prophecy of Malachy, a sacrifice universal, perpetual and identical everywhere.

The sacrificial words employed by St. Cyprian are too well known to need recapitulation. The word “Sacrificium” is admitted by the learned to be St. Cyprian’s ordinary designation for the Eucharistic service; to offer the Eucharist is “celebrare sacrificium,” and once “celebrare” absolutely. The Bishops are “sacerdotes”; the Eucharistic table is “altare”; the whole rite is called “sacrificium dominicum,” and the

¹ Lib. iv., cap. 17, n. 5.

³ Lib. *De velandis Virginibus*, c. 9.

⁶ Lib. *De Oratione*, c. 14.

² *Ad Scapulam*, lib. 2, c. 2.

⁴ Lib. *De Cultu fœm.*, c. 7.

⁶ III. 22.

consecrated Host "hostia dominica".¹ This, therefore, was the language of the Church of Africa in the third century. And there is one allusion at least in St. Cyprian which proves that the traditional interpretation of Malachy i. 11 was well known to him and fully accepted, so much so, indeed, that it was a matter of course: "quod sacrificium vetus evacuaretur et novum celebraretur".²

The very early use of the expression "Oblation" (*προσφορά*) as applied to the Holy Eucharistic rite is also admitted by all students of the Fathers. As Lightfoot points out, it is found even in Clement of Rome.³ When St. Clement, speaking of the Eucharistic liturgy, calls the minister the "high priest of our oblations and the advocate thereof" there is a sacerdotal character about the phrase which must surely have been inconceivable had it not been recognised that there was an outward sensible sacrificial rite.

As a concluding specimen of early patristic language, let us cite St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who in the middle of the fourth century undertook, in his Catechisms, to set the Christian faith before his hearers in language, not of the schools, but of common use. Speaking of praying for the departed, he says that on behalf of their souls "there is offered up (*ἀναφέρεται*) the supplication (*δέησις*—one of the words used in 1 Tim. ii. 1) of the holy and tremendous there-lying sacrifice (*προκειμένης θυσίας*)". And again, speaking of appeasing God on behalf of the souls of the dead, he says, "we weave no crown" such as might be offered to an earthly King "but we offer (*προσφέρουμεν*) Christ slain for our sins, imploring upon them and ourselves the mercy of Him who loveth men". It is merely necessary to observe that these words are spoken, not of prayer in general, but of the Eucharistic rite.

¹ *De Cath. Eccl. Unitate*, c. 17.

² *Testimoniorum*, i. 16,

³ *Ad. Cor.*, 40, and 36,

To analyse St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine would take us too long. Their manifold texts can be consulted in Bellarmine, and elsewhere. What has been said is enough to show that the word Sacrifice, and its congeners, have been applied to the Holy Eucharist by Christian writers from sub-apostolic times. So that the Council of Trent's language is not that of innovation, nor of mediæval corruption, but lawfully connected in sense and true development with that which the Church used from the beginning. It is for those who have dropped the word Sacrifice as applied to the Holy Eucharist to explain from the point of view of innovation.

In order the better to understand the full meaning of the Catholic dogma which teaches that the Mass is a true Sacrifice, and to attain an intelligent appreciation of the language of the Fathers and of theologians on this great Catholic truth, it will be necessary to consider the history and significance of the word "Sacrifice". There is certainly no word that has played a more conspicuous part in the annals of religion since the world began.

The definition of Sacrifice which is accepted by Catholic theologians may be expressed in these words: Sacrifice is the offering of a material thing, effected by its real or mystical destruction by a priest, unto God, as a lawfully instituted symbol of the honour and reverence which man owes to his Creator.¹

On this definition we may observe, that whilst it is not so explicit, or so comprehensive, as those given by some theologians, it contains the two "notes" which differentiate the idea of Sacrifice, and expresses them with a moderation which enables us to reconcile the definition with historical facts. For no one will deny that, not only in the records of the Bible, but, it may be said, in the history of man, as far as that history

¹ See Billot, *De Ecclesiæ Sacramentis*, i., p. 543.

has been made out, there has been a universal practice of devoting things, animate and inanimate, to what has been conceived as a deity. To "devote" a thing to a deity necessarily means either to hand it over to the deity, or, in the absence of the deity, or in the event of the deity not being visible, to destroy that thing in such a way that it should be effectively in future useless to the offerer.

There are some theologians who have maintained that Sacrifice is a dictate, or a consequence, of natural religion. In other words, they argue that as soon as a human mind recognises God as Creator and last End, there is at once the impulse to express homage by Sacrifice.¹ But the arguments used do not go farther than to prove that, where a man recognises the Deity, he naturally feels urged to worship such Deity as supreme, and to express that supreme worship by external signs. The remarkable fact of the prevalence of Sacrifice in the heathen world from the earliest times known to history cannot be explained on merely natural grounds. The history of Sacrifice is no doubt very obscure. But it is beyond dispute that wherever we find a people with even rudimentary national or tribal organisation we find some kind of public "worship" and that worship includes some kind of Sacrifice. It is also certain that in the more civilised nations of antiquity Sacrifices were offered in recognition of a Deity—not by any means a Deity with the attributes of the one and supreme God, but of a Deity, or rather Deities, who were to their worshippers in the relation of beneficence, vengeance, or fatherhood. The purpose or significance of the Sacrifice would everywhere depend upon the worshippers' conception of the Deity. When, therefore, we find, as we do find in the Oriental, the Greek, and the Roman civilisation, honorific or dedicatory Sacrifices, and propitiatory or expiatory Sacrifices, it is clear that these

¹ See Stentrup, *Soteriologia*, vol. ii., p. 207.

peoples had the notion of a Deity or Deities who were, on the one hand, so august as to be worthy of a worship that would never have been given to a mere mortal, and, on the other, so powerful, so ready to punish, that it was constantly necessary to avert their anger, just or unjust. It does not seem possible to account for this state of things without having recourse to supernatural interference, or revelation. Nothing in the science of anthropology, as far as it has hitherto progressed, accounts for the development of these kinds of Sacrifice. In reality, all the sacrificial phenomena of savage races—and they are numerous and interesting—testify rather to a degradation of a primæval idea of Sacrifice than to a rudimentary stage of that idea which greater culture gradually refined and elaborated. If savage man began by a mere feeling of dread for the hidden powers of nature, or for his own dead ancestors, it is more reasonable to suppose that advancing civilisation would have lessened this feeling, and at length removed it altogether, than that it should have been elevated into reverence for the justice and goodness of the Gods and the consciousness of sin and defilement which required expiation. An appeal to history or anthropology is here to no purpose. There is no sign that science will ever be able to trace the steps of a natural development from the unreasoning fear of nature or of the dead to the religion that offered sacrifice to Artemis or to Olympian Zeus. Neither is there any means of showing, on the opposite theory, the steps by which a Divine revelation of a supreme God and of the worship of Sacrifice was obscured, degraded and almost lost. But it would seem that there is no warrant for supposing that, after the expulsion from Eden, the whole human race fell into such barbarism as we have now before our eyes in certain parts of Africa, or have recently had in Australia. There is a large part of the world which seems never to have been absolutely savage. Syria, Arabia, Persia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Greece—we might perhaps add China

—roughly mark out a part of the world which any one who believes in the Bible can hardly think of as not having had, at all times, some idea of creation, of the immortality of the soul and of divine worship. We are told that stone implements have been dug up in every one of these countries, and that similar evidences show they must have passed through phases of uncivilisation such as we know to have existed elsewhere. This difficulty could, no doubt, be answered. But it is only a type of the difficulties that surround the Scriptural account of the origin of man. Meanwhile, if we believe that there was a primitive revelation, it is certain that that revelation would not be easily forgotten altogether in that part of the earth where human life began. It is natural that its light would have waned gradually; that many of its truths would become distorted and its ideas degraded; but it does not seem that God could have allowed it to die out altogether. And it is the unmistakable view of the Fathers that the illumination of the Divine Word was shed upon the heathen world, and that, in the phrase of Tertullian, His shadow, before He was made Flesh, fell on the Gentiles. But this does not make it less likely that a large portion of the race would sink into barbarism through moral and physical causes; through wanderings, isolation, war, climate, and the weakness and blindness of fallen nature. We might justly expect to find, then, first, that there has survived among the Pagans a very distinct idea of Sacrifice as a most fitting mode of worship; and, secondly, that the idea of Sacrifice, in many quarters, has been degraded to the animism and fetishism of savage tribes.

The definition of Sacrifice given by theologians is partly grounded on what we know has happened in the world, and partly on what is known to be the real relation of man to the One God. It may not be possible to assert that in the whole of Pagan antiquity no instance has ever occurred of a Sacrifice offered in

recognition of a Being conceived as having the attributes of the Supreme God. But it is certain that such a Sacrifice must have been very rare. Neither is there any reason for supposing that, when they did offer Sacrifice, even the most intelligent of the Greeks or the Romans intended that Sacrifice as a "substitute" for their own lives, forfeited to the deity by sin. The most we can find among the Gentile nations, speaking generally, is the recognition of divinity, in an inadequate sense of the word, and the impulse of propitiation or expiation. Even in the Sacrifices of the Jewish Law there is no explicit statement or recognition of absolute dominion of Almighty God over man. The Sacrifices of the Bible, before the Mosaic legislation, such as those of Abel, of Cain and of Noe, seem to be Sacrifices of honour and recognition of God, and not primarily Sacrifices of expiation. On the other hand, the greater part of the sacrificial system of the Levitical law was clearly expiatory. But it is true that the Jewish Sacrifices, from beginning to end, implied the unity and supremacy of God, as it had been revealed to the nation, and that the prophets and psalmists used phrases which signified that the primary purpose of some sacrifices at least was the honouring and glorifying of Jehovah. When David, fleeing to the desert, invoked the help of God against his pursuers, he prayed thus:—¹

I will offer Thee voluntary Sacrifices—

I will give glory to Thy Name, Jehovah, for it is good.

We have here an instance of a Sacrifice not prescribed by the Law, but "voluntary".² Psalm lxxv is a remarkable example of a hymn of praise and gratitude. It begins:—

Praise the Lord, all the earth,
Sing the glory of His Name.

After recounting His beneficent actions it continues:—

¹ Psalm liii. 8.

² Cf. Leviticus vii. 16.

I will go into Thy House with holocausts,
 I will pay my vows . . .
 I will offer Thee sacrifices of excellence,
 With the smoke of the flesh of rams ;
 Oxen and goats will I immolate unto Thee !

In the Prophets, as in the Psalms, there are numerous passages in which Almighty God blames the Sacrifices of Israel and Juda, and refuses to accept them, because they are not accompanied by dispositions of true worship ; as for example in Psalm xlix :—

Do I eat the flesh of oxen ?
 Do I drink the blood of goats ?
 Offer to the Lord a Sacrifice of praise. . . .
 He honoureth me that offereth a Sacrifice of praise.

These Sacrifices of honour, worship and dedication were generally “holocausts,” or whole burnt offerings. The sin-offerings, or Sacrifices for sin, were the most characteristic Sacrifices of the Levitical law. There were also Sacrifices of thanksgiving, both bloody and unbloody.

The purpose and object of Catholic theologians in framing a definition of Sacrifice is to find one that will fit the great Sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Blessed Lord’s redeeming Passion and Death not only includes in its efficacy and significance certain elements which the Holy Spirit has conserved and kept alive in the whole history of the human race—and to which the comprehensive name of Sacrifice has, by consent, been given—but it embodies the whole of the significance, effectiveness and perfection which those inadequate Sacrifices, even the Levitical, never attained. This was not only because He was the God-Man, but because, in His omniscience, He necessarily had before Him the absolutely true and adequate view of the One Supreme God, the Lord of all being and life, and the Infinite Holiness which sin has offended. Although there never was a Sacrifice in all history, before Christ, that fully corresponded with what a Sacrifice in its

absolute sense could be, Catholic theology has no difficulty, now that the Word is made flesh, in recognising what such an absolute Sacrifice must be, and is. Honour and expiation by a visible offering, accompanied most frequently by blood, are the elements we find in history. In Christ's Sacrifice we find, first, the most august and awful external act of oblation and immolation; next, the internal Act of the Will of an Infinite Person; thirdly, the explicit recognition to the full degree that God is man's supreme Lord; fourthly, the virtual substitution of the Divine Victim for the human race; fifthly, the paying of a ransom absolutely sufficient and superabundant; sixthly, the personal expiation of all possible guilt; and, lastly, the impetration, or the securing by intercession, of the Divine benignity in all its width and depth. The definition of Sacrifice may be enlarged and expanded to any degree in order to express all these things. There is one other element of the sacrificial idea, which is found widely spread in the world, and is indicated in the Old Testament—that is, the idea that Sacrifice, when complete, included a Communion, or common meal, not only of the assistants with each other, but even with God Himself to whom it was offered.¹ As Cornelius à Lapide says: "Almighty God, whose delight it is to be with the children of men, in this way wished to demonstrate His condescension towards them, showing Himself so familiar with them as to share their table and meal".² This could not be embodied in the Sacrifice of the Cross, but is found most perfectly and touchingly realised in that Sacrifice which for all times continues and represents that of the Cross.

The Catholic view of the Sacrifice of the Mass cannot be better expressed than in the words of the Council of Trent. "Our Lord Jesus Christ," says the Council, "was ordained by God as a priest according to

¹ See Leviticus xxi. 21, xxii. 25.

² *In Levit.*, ii. 1.

the order of Melchisedech, to bring to perfection what was wanting to the ancient Testament. Accordingly, He wrought our Redemption once for all by the Cross. But because His Priesthood was to continue for ever, and in order to leave to His beloved Spouse, the Church, a visible Sacrifice, by which the bloody Sacrifice of the Cross might be represented, and the memory thereof kept up till the end of time; in order, moreover, that its saving efficacy might be applied to the remission of our daily sins, He, on the night before He suffered, offered His Body and Blood under the *species* of Bread and Wine to God the Father, and commanded His Apostles and their successors to offer as He Himself had done. . . . This is that clean oblation predicted by Malachy, and not obscurely referred to by St. Paul in the phrase 'the table of the Lord'. This is also that which was prefigured by the various typical Sacrifices of the natural and Levitical laws." Hence, in the Canons which follow, the Mass is defined to be: (1) a true and proper Sacrifice; (2) not merely a Sacrifice of praise or of thanksgiving, or a bare commemoration of the Sacrifice of Calvary; but (3) a propitiatory Sacrifice, which may be offered for the living and the dead, for sin, punishment, satisfaction and other needs.¹

The Sacrifice of the Mass, then, is at once a real Sacrifice in the proper sense of that term, and a representative Sacrifice. It is, in one sense, the Sacrifice of the Cross repeated over and over again; but its purpose and its mode of offering are different. Every time it is offered, Christ is the Victim and Christ is the principal Offerer or Priest, just as upon Calvary. But in Calvary Redemption was wrought or purchased, completely, once for all; in the Mass the efficacy of that Redemption is applied to souls. Again, on Calvary the offering was made by a real bloodshedding and death; in the Mass it is made without blood or death. Catholics are disinclined to

¹ Sess. xxii., cap. i.-ix

say that the Mass is a different Sacrifice from that of the Cross ; because not only are Priest and Victim the same in both, but whatever the Mass effects for the benefit of men is entirely derived from the abounding efficacy of the death of Calvary. But, as is evident, it is not, as a matter of language, erroneous to say that they are different Sacrifices, first, because the Mass is at least numerically different from the oblation of the Cross, secondly, because in the Mass Christ is offered under sacramental species and not under His own species, and thirdly, because it only applies the graces of Christ and does not originate them.

It would appear, therefore, that the "representative" character of the Mass is the very key to the understanding of what it essentially is. This does not mean that its essence is to "represent" or "commemorate". To speak in such a way would be to express the heresy of the Protestant reformers. It means that, if we can discover what precisely it is, in the action of the Mass, that represents the death of Jesus Christ, we shall have discovered what it is that is the very heart and being of the Sacrifice.

Now this representation of the death of Christ must be, as the Council of Trent says, visible to the Church. Anything that takes place beyond the sphere of the senses of men must fail to be "representative". The representative note of the Mass must therefore be found in the external ritual of that solemn act. The "mode of offering," which recalls, commemorates, and portrays Calvary, must be an external, visible, and sensible rite. Where, then, do we find such a rite? Undoubtedly in the consecration of the Bread and of the Cup by separate acts of consecration. Other things, no doubt, are visible and sensible in the action of the Mass ; but they all lead up to this consecration, or result from it. No other action—no lifting up, or presenting of the consecrated species—is a natural representation of the blood-shedding of Calvary. When the priest, at the end

of the Canon, elevates Host and Chalice together, saying, "All honour and glory" to the Father, it need not be denied that such an action, under some circumstances, might be a Sacrifice. But it is not the Sacrifice of the Mass. The Precious Blood, under the species of Wine, is already separated from the Body under the species of Bread. The "representative" action of the Sacrifice has already taken place; for it is clear that this "separation" or effusion must be the act by which the physical blood-shedding of Calvary is represented. It is natural, therefore, and in accordance with Catholic tradition, that this separate consecration—this visible and impressive placing the Body of Christ upon the Altar and then placing His sacred Blood in the Chalice—should be what it represents, *viz.*, the essential "mystical immolation" which constitutes the Sacrifice of the Mass.

This view is not altogether free from difficulties. The accepted definition of a Sacrifice includes some kind of real destruction, immolation, or immutation, of the victim. The double consecration, or mystical blood-shedding, of which we speak, certainly causes no real change in the Body of Christ, much less does it entail real death or destruction. In fact, we know that our Blessed Lord in His human nature, is now in Heaven, and is immortal and impassible.

Some modern theologians have entirely discarded from the notion of Sacrifice all idea of destruction. We are told that what is essential in Sacrifice is not the "destruction" of the offering, but its being handed over and consecrated to God. But the broad features of universal tradition, and of Old Testament revelation, force us to recognise that the impressive word Sacrifice covers a human impulse, whether a natural impulse merely or one inspired or fostered by the Holy Spirit, that has urged men to kill, to burn, and to destroy, in the worship of the Deity. That impulse, put into execution upon millions of altars, in every region of the world, throughout all the ages, and consecrated by the ordinance and

the gracious acceptance of God, especially in the worship of the Temple, is what men mean when they talk of Sacrifice. The Cross itself, whereon was consummated what the Word of God calls by every sacrificial name, was the explanation, the fulfilment and the anti-type of those very slayings and burnings which men have persisted in connecting with adoration and expiation. Indeed it is difficult to see how a gift could be effectively offered to God without being in some way put out of the power of the offerer, or made useless to him. If the ox or the lamb dedicated to God had been allowed to live on as before, for the service of man, it would have been instinctively felt that no real offering had been made. Such dedication or consecration would no doubt have been admitted to be a religious act, acceptable to God, but it would have been an act more in the interest of the worshipper than one of pure homage or propitiation. The victim, whether actually slain or not, would be expected to be put into such a state as would be at least virtual destruction. Thus, an animal would be slain, or perhaps driven into the desert, wine would be poured out and wasted, incense would be burnt.

Moreover, in speaking of the Mass itself, Catholic tradition, as well as the Schools of Theology and the common usage of the faithful, concur in the employment of the terms known as sacrificial. The very earliest liturgies describe the offering in the Mass as "immolation," our Lord as a "victim," and the action as a "holocaust". The Fathers use the same and other equivalent terms.¹ All the terms of the ancient Jewish sacrifices are applied to the Mass. If there were no "destruction" or "immolation," there would be no victim, no "slaying of the Lamb," no immolation; this last word is applied in the most formal manner to the Mass by the Council of Trent, when it says that our Lord left Him.

¹ See the references in Bellarmine, *Controversiæ: De Eucharistia* lib. v., cap. 15.

self *sub signis visibilibus immolandum*—to be immolated under visible signs.¹

In order, then, to understand—as far as we are permitted to understand—where the essential point of the Sacrifice lies, and how a real “immutation” can take place and yet the glorified Body of Christ be in no way physically affected, we must carefully bear in mind that it is *Christ in the Sacrament* that is sacrificed, not Christ absolutely. This does not mean that Christ is only figuratively and not really sacrificed. We must recall what was said of our Lord’s presence under the species.² In the same way that the sacramental Presence is a real presence, although our Lord is really in heaven all the time and there cannot be more than one Christ, so a sacramental alteration—a real alteration of sacramental conditions—is a real, and not merely a figurative alteration of the status or condition of our Lord under the species (*sub speciebus*). Given the existence of our Lord under sacramental conditions, if first one sacramental condition is set up, and then another which is not a mere repetition of the first, there is a real (sacramental) change. The mere reiteration of the consecration under the species of bread would bring no sacramental alteration. But if another species, a different species, be taken up, and the awful process of transubstantiation effected in a different way, then undoubtedly new sacramental conditions are set up. By the consecration of the bread, the bread is changed into the Body of our Lord; the sacred Blood, Soul and Divinity and the whole Christ becoming present at the same time, by what is called concomitance—that is, because Christ can no longer be divided, or be without any part of His sacred being. But in the consecration of the Chalice, it is not our Lord’s Body which is the object of transubstantiation, but His precious Blood. The wine is changed, not into the Body, but into the

¹ Sess. xxii., cap. i.

² Cf. ch. iii., *supra*.

Blood. True, the Body, Soul and Divinity at once become present by concomitance. But the transubstantiation is an entirely different transubstantiation. It is not given to mortal intelligence to penetrate deeply into this most marvellous and sacramental conversion. But we can see far enough to recognise with the greatest clearness that it is one thing for a material substance to be converted into the sacred Body, and another for another substance to be converted into Blood. The twofold consecration is, therefore, a real (sacramental) immutation. It is as real as the Real Presence.

There is no need to insist upon the object or motive of our Lord in instituting this twofold transubstantiation. Be it observed it is not merely twofold on our Lord's side; that is, first the Body, and then the Blood. It is also twofold on the side of the species; the Body passing under the species of bread, the Blood under those of wine. This was evidently instituted in order that the twofold consecration might be visible; visible, not in itself but in its effects. For the effect is that one's senses take note of certain visible appearances which one knows to be Christ's Body (and the whole Christ) and others which one knows to be Christ's Blood (also the whole Christ). This is visible; and as there was first the action upon the Bread and afterwards on the Chalice, the separation of the Blood from the Body, really effected *sub speciebus*, may be well said to be visibly transacted. The second consecration has a plain, visible and intended relation to the first. Thus the very thing in which the Passion is represented carries in its inmost actuality the essentials of a true Sacrifice.

No one, as it need not be said, maintains that our Blessed Lord in His natural glorified state, dies again; or even that so much as a tremor of the most delicate of the nerves or tissues of His sacred flesh is caused by the words of consecration. It is sufficient that, in His sacramental state, and as present under the species, He should be the subject of some real occurrence which

should congruously represent the blow of the sacrificial knife. That our Lord's Blood, at any time since the resurrection, should flow afresh from His Body, would only be possible on the hypothesis of His being in the sacramental state; of His existing under species not His own. But, given this unique and stupendous mode of existence, the Precious Blood is separated under the Sacrament; and if separated in the Sacrament, it is really, not figuratively separated. For, in the Sacrament, the usual conditions of space are superseded. Therefore separation may really occur not only without visible removal, but without local removal either. It is no matter that our Blessed Lord is just as wholly under the species of Wine as under the species of Bread. The effect of the words of consecration is to transubstantiate the Wine into the Blood. Whatever else happens the Wine is *transubstantiated* into nothing but the Blood, and the Sacred Blood continues (as long as the species last) to be the result—the *terminus ad quem*—of a marvellous operation which is not a creation or a substitution, but a change. This is a real, and not a figurative result, and it is effected by the words of consecration. In that act of consecration, that which is visible and audible expresses vividly what happens; and what happens is real. Thus we have, in the Mass, not merely a representation of a Sacrifice—a symbolical reproduction of the Sacrifice of the Cross. We have that, but we have very much more. We have the real (sacramental) separation of the Sacred Blood from the Body of the Lord. But if this be true, the very thing which makes the Mass a "representative" Sacrifice, makes it a real Sacrifice also. That is, the separate consecration, which is the visible work of the Priest (in the person of Christ) not only pictures and represents the blood-shedding of Calvary, but also is that (Sacramental) "immutation" of Christ which abundantly verifies the conditions of a true Sacrifice. I venture to say that this has always been the *sensus*

fidelum—the persuasion of Catholic tradition. The consecration of the Host brings Christ down upon the Altar; the consecration of the Chalice separates from His Body in an unbloody way the Precious Blood. Thus we have the picture of the Cross of Calvary, and the very act that makes the picture constitutes the reality of the Sacrifice. If there is one phrase in Christian antiquity which is universally used to express what happens in the Mass, it is the “mystical effusion” of the Blood of Jesus Christ. Let us recall the well-known words of St. Gregory Nazianzen: “O holy worshipper of God,” he cries out to a priest, “delay not to pray and to plead for us when by word thou drawest down the Word, when with *bloodless cutting* thou dividest the Body and Blood of the Lord, using thy voice as a sword”.¹ The words ἀναίμακτος τομή mean the mystical separation—the separation which takes place in the species only, or in Christ under the species. And although St. Thomas lived long before any one had expressed the opinions of De Lugo, yet it is well to remember that he uses the following words: “Inasmuch as in this Sacrament is represented the Passion of Christ, it has the quality (*ratio*) of a Sacrifice”.² St. Thomas, it need not be said, held the Mass to be more than a mere representation of the Passion. Yet he places the *ratio*, or essential, of the Sacrifice in its representing the Passion. Obviously, this can only mean that the *ratio*, or essential, of the Mass as a Sacrifice is found in that external significative action (with its results) which shows forth the blood-shedding, that is in the twofold consecration, resulting in a mystical and yet visible division of the Blood from the Body.

Students of theology are well aware that the great masters of theological science have expressed views on the essential nature of the Sacrifice of the Mass which are very divergent from one another, and which perhaps

¹ *Ep. ad Amphiloichium*, 171.

² III., qu. lxxix., a. 7.

might seem to go farther into the mystery of the Sacrifice than the view which has been here set down. Let me explain briefly, but as clearly as possible, what some of these views are.

Vasquez (1604) teaches that the Mass is a Sacrifice inasmuch as our Lord's bloody Sacrifice is represented therein—the very Body and Blood of Christ being made present by the consecration. In other words there lies on the Altar, by virtue of the words of consecration, the image of the Sacrifice of the Cross.

It has been objected to this view of Vasquez that his reasoning would make the Mass a representation of a Sacrifice (that is, of Calvary), but not a Sacrifice itself. The Lamb that was slain lies on the Christian altar; but how can we say that He is slain on that altar unless we can point out in the act by which He comes there something more than is seen by Vasquez? Is a representation of a Sacrifice, however vivid, necessarily a Sacrifice itself? Is the mystical image of the bleeding Victim, which now bleeds no more, in any sense a shedding of blood?

It is very probable that if Vasquez had lived to answer the difficulties raised against his position by men who followed him, he would have made himself a little more explicit. He has been taken to mean that the mere presence on the altar of the Body and Blood of Christ under the two *species*, since it is the representation of the Lamb that is slain, is the Sacrifice. But it is probable that he did not mean the mere presence, but the presence as brought about by the consecrating act. One thing may represent another thing, and one act may represent another act; and if the matter which has to be represented is precisely the resultant of an action, the representation may be said to stand for the thing, but the representation will then itself include representative *action*. We cannot conceive that Vasquez would have maintained that the Mass was a mere representation of the Cross. The

Council of Trent had already defined. By "representation," therefore, he must have meant the consecrated species not precisely as they lie on the Altar, but as the resultant of consecration. That is to say, the Host and Cup represent the slain Lamb, but it is the Host and Cup as *consecrated*—that is, as affected by an action done by the Priest. That action is the production of the Body, and then separately of the Blood, by the words of consecration. And this seems to coincide with what I have called the plain Catholic tradition.

The view of De Lugo (1643), which has been adopted by Cardinal Franzelin, may be given in the words of the former. "Although," writes De Lugo, "in the consecration, the Body of Christ is not destroyed substantially, yet it is destroyed to human estimation (*humano modo*), inasmuch as it receives a more lowly status, a status which renders it unable to act or exercise itself as a human body, and makes it fitted for other uses, *viz.*, for food; hence, to human estimation, it is just as if it were really made into bread, and were adapted and prepared as food. Now, a change of this kind suffices for a real Sacrifice; for here we have a thing which is not fitted to be eaten, made a food, and so made a food that it is fitted for no other use than that of food; and this is a greater change than some others which in the estimation of men sufficed for Sacrifice."¹ Cardinal Franzelin approves of this view, and expresses it in the following words: In the Mass "Christ, by the ministry of the Priest, places His Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine, thus as it were humbling His most sacred humanity from its natural functions and manner of existence to the state of food."²

The chief objection to the thesis so profoundly thought

¹ *De Ven. Euch. Sacr., Disp. xix., sect. 5.*

² *De SS. Euch. Sacram. ac Sacrif.; Thes., xvi.* Franzelin's word which is here translated "humbling" is *exinanitio*—the well known expression of St. Paul, Philipp. ii. 7, *ἐκένωσεν, exinanivit*, used to mark the emptying Himself, or putting off of the glory of the Divinity in the Incarnation.

out by these learned men is that they seem to place the Sacrifice of the Mass, not in the twofold consecration of the Bread and Wine, but in that of the Bread alone or the Wine alone. De Lugo, let us hasten to add, most emphatically states that not even by the Pope's dispensation could Mass be said by the consecration of one species alone. But this would be only because of the expressed will of Jesus Christ. But if our Lord has thus instituted the Sacrifice, so that there can be no Sacrifice without the double consecration, it is natural to conclude that there is something in the very double consecration itself which is of the Sacrificial essence. Is it quite reasonable or probable that there should be two acts—the consecration of the Bread, and the consecration of the Chalice, each of which would be a complete and essential Sacrifice except for the expressed will of our Blessed Lord? From the Council of Trent, as from the Fathers, we gather beyond the possibility of mistake that, as a fact, there is, and can be, no Sacrifice unless the double consecration takes place, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that some feature of that double consecration *is* the essence of the Sacrifice. The transubstantiation of the sacred Body may, of itself, and prescinding from the institution of the Mass, have all the necessary conditions of a Sacrifice. We can imagine the possibility of a dispensation in which the Sacrifice would be that, and nothing more. But this would not be the Mass. The Mass is the outcome of the Cross. The Mass, as faith teaches us, represents the Sacrifice of the Cross. To represent that bloody Sacrifice, the Mass has been instituted after a certain fashion—that is, with the consecration first of the Bread and then of the Chalice. It is natural to think that, not only the representative nature of the Mass, but its very essence as a Sacrifice is to be found in this double consecration.

From what has been said, the conclusion seems to follow that the Communion is not an essential part of

the Sacrifice of the Mass, whether we speak of the Priest's Communion or that of the people. Some theologians of great name, such as Bellarmine and De Lugo, have maintained the contrary. Bellarmine considered that the Communion was like the consumption of the holocaust by fire. The victim must always be consumed, he said, or else the Sacrifice was not complete. But, as we have seen, the mystical destruction—the equivalent of the sword and the fire—is complete in the double consecration. De Lugo insists that the Communion, although not by itself the cause or occasion of that "destruction" which is of the essence of Sacrifice, nevertheless follows up, as it were, the action of the knife by the action of fire; the Divine Victim being first slain in the consecration and finally destroyed in the Communion. But it seems somewhat fanciful to see in the Communion, which is plainly a common banquet, principally an act of destruction. The partaking of a Sacrifice has always had the character of a meal. The meal, which is as widespread as Sacrifice itself, shows us the participation by the people in a common feast with the Deity, and a common feast with one another. The significance of the Sacrifice, whether as an act of worship, of thanksgiving, or of propitiation was complete before the meal began. The meal signified something further; it typified that happy familiarity with heavenly powers, which an accepted Sacrifice might be presumed to bring about, and that union of brotherly love of which the worship and protecting beneficence of the same God is the most effective bond.

The Communion of the celebrant, however, is essential to the Mass in this sense, that, like the offertory, it appears to be of Divine institution, and cannot be dispensed with, even by the Church herself. The Mass was instituted not only to provide the redeemed people of God with a Sacrifice, but also to furnish them with the greatest of all Sacraments. The priest when he communicates receives, as a Sacrament, that Divine Victim

whom he has first offered up as a Sacrifice. The sacrificial meal is the Sacrament.

It is in the same way that the faithful partake of the Sacrifice by Communion. When St. Paul forbade his converts at Corinth to partake of meats offered to idols, he said, "I speak to the wise; judge ye yourselves what I say"; that is, You cannot fail to understand what I here contend for; "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the Communion (*κοινωνία*) of the Blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?" In other words, those who drink that Cup of benediction, do they not partake of the Blood of Christ? Those who eat of our bread, do they not partake of the Flesh of Christ? And he concludes, "(You must surely see that) you cannot drink the Cup of the Lord and the Cup of devils; you cannot share the table (or meal) of the Lord and the table of devils".¹ Thus the sacrificial meal, to all who share it, is the partaking of the Victim, and the participating in those gifts which the Sacrifice brings—that is, with Christians, the fruits of the Blessed Sacrament. It is no matter that, at any particular Mass, the faithful who are present do not partake. The priest always communicates; and, for the rest, the Mass is the one perpetual Sacrifice of the Christian Church, and it is always true, speaking of the Church throughout the world, that the faithful are partaking of the Holy Communion. The Council of Trent says: "This holy Synod would desire that in every Mass the faithful who assist thereat should communicate, not only spiritually and in desire, but also by sacramentally partaking, that so they might share more abundantly in the fruits of this most holy Sacrifice". But the Council goes on to define that so-called "private" Masses, or Masses in which the priest alone communicates, are not only lawful but commendable. And thereupon it adds

¹ 1 Cor. x., 15 *sqq.*

the interesting note, that "all such Masses are rightly considered to be really common"—that is, not private or individual devotions—"partly because the people spiritually communicate thereat, and partly because they are celebrated by the Church's public minister not for himself only, but for all the faithful who belong to the Body of Christ".¹ True Catholic feeling, therefore, never forgets that the Mass is not only a Sacrifice, but a supper or meal, or common banquet, of which it may be said that all the communicants of the whole world partake. The Body of Christ is brought down upon the altar by the Mass. Whether it is partaken of at that Mass or afterwards, that Communion is always the participation of the Sacrifice. The Body of Christ is the same Body on every altar. Whether the faithful receive it at this particular Mass or do not receive it, Christ's servants ever throng to the one altar and the one table. It is only those who reject the Real Presence, who sever the Body of the Lord reserved, from the Body of the Lord in the Eucharistic Liturgy. They speak of the Lord's Supper, and make out that the common meal is all that there is. Catholic faith holds that it is the Sacrifice which gives its meaning and its efficacy to the common meal. Although the Church has always upheld that those who sacramentally receive at Mass partake far more abundantly of the fruits of the Mass; nevertheless, since the Body of the Lord, once consecrated in the Mass, remains real, and subsists as a sacramental embodiment of all that the Mass can effect (as far as it is His will Who there is really present), all who at any time communicate join in the Supper of the Lord. The Mass is the Lord's Supper; but it is a Supper which completes a Sacrifice.

As no one who is ever so little learned in Christian antiquity can help admitting that, up to the Reformation, both East and West were unanimous in upholding

¹ Sess. xxii., cap. 6.

a real Christian Sacrifice and a real Altar, Anglicans of the more serious kind have had recourse to various explanations in order to reconcile their "symbolist" views on the Presence with the possibility of a Sacrifice. Cranmer said: "When the old Fathers called the Mass or Supper of the Lord a Sacrifice, they meant that it was a Sacrifice of laud and thanksgiving (and so as well the people as the priest do Sacrifice), or else that it was a remembrance of the very true Sacrifice propitiatory of Christ".¹ When Pope Leo XIII., in his Apostolic Letter on Anglican Orders, said that in the whole Anglican Ordinal he could find no clear mention of Sacrifice, the Anglican Archbishops, in their Reply, expressed themselves as aggrieved, and said, among other things: "First, we offer the Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; then, next, we plead and represent before the Father the Sacrifice of the Cross . . . and, lastly, we offer the Sacrifice of ourselves to the Creator of all things, which we have already signified by the oblation of His creatures. This whole action, in which the people has necessarily to take part with the priest, we are accustomed to call the Eucharistic Sacrifice."

This last assertion is hardly borne out by fact. Certainly, not one Anglican in a thousand is accustomed to call the Lord's Supper the Eucharistic Sacrifice. But even if it were so called, it would not, in the Anglican view, be a Sacrifice of Jesus Christ Himself. This, and nothing less, is what the Fathers mean by the sacrificial terms which they everywhere apply to the Eucharist.

¹ *Defence*, p. 351 (ed. Parker Society).

CHAPTER X.

THE MASS AS A LITURGY.

the present chapter, we will consider the Mass as a Liturgy ; not only in order the better to understand it when we assist at it, but also to bring out more clearly what the universal Church has thought, and thinks, about the Eucharistic Sacrifice both in the past and in the present.

The word Liturgy, from the very earliest Christian times, has been used to designate the Eucharistic consecration, and its attendant ceremonial. It seems certain that the word, in this sense, is of New Testament authority. In Acts xiii. 2 we read : " As they were *ministering* to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them : Separate unto me Saul and Barnabas ". The word " ministering " is *λειτουργοῦντες*. It is the word used to denote in the Old Testament the ministrations of the Priests and the Levites. That it signified the Eucharistic consecration, seems clear from parallel passages, where instead of *λειτουργοῦντες* we have " the breaking of Bread ". For example " on the first day of the week when they were assembled to break bread, Paul discoursed ".¹

It may be asked if there is any trace of a Liturgy—that is, a more or less elaborate ceremonial—of the Holy Eucharist in the New Testament ? To this

¹ Acts xx. 7, 8.

I answer that we can hardly doubt that St. John described such a Liturgy in the Apocalypse. St. Irenæus (second century) seems to see in the altar and temple of the Apocalypse, an image of the earthly worship of the Church. After speaking of the Eucharistic oblation he adds: "Now there is an altar in heaven . . . and a temple, as St. John says in the Apocalypse, 'And the temple of God was opened'".¹ Now what do we find in the Apocalypse? We have the description of an assembly on the first day of the week, over which presides a venerable pontiff, seated on a throne, and encircled by four and twenty ancients or presbyters. The white robe, reaching to the feet, and the golden girdle, are given as the Pontiff's garments; we have the chanting of praise, denoted by the harps, canticles, etc.; there is an altar, seven golden candlesticks, a golden censer, with its fire and smoking incense, and a book with seven seals. There is present a Lamb, standing as it were slain, and supreme honours are given to Him by all the earth. Under the altar are the bodies of the holy martyrs; and before it stands an Angel, offering up the prayers of the faithful upon earth.

St. John wrote in this strain about A.D. 100. St. Irenæus commented on his words about sixty years later, say 167. Can there be any doubt that the Eucharistic Office on that day was something like what St. John describes—an altar, a pontiff, priests, a pontiff at the altar, a victim who was the Lamb of God, lights, incense, the relics of the saints underneath the altar, and hymns of praise, thanks, and adoration?

The Eucharistic rite, in the early ages, had various names. It was called *Liturgia*, as we have seen; "*Synaxis*," that is "assembly"; "*Collecta*," which is a translation of *synaxis*; "*officia divinorum sacramentorum*";² "*solemnia*," the solemnities; the sacrifice;

¹ IV. 18.

² *Vide* St. Hilary on Ps. lxxv.

the "oblation". But for sixteen hundred years at least the Greeks have called it "Liturgia," and the Latins "Missa," or the Mass.

Learned writers have not always been agreed as to the derivation and original meaning of the word *Missa*. The more common opinion is that it is equivalent to *missio* or *dimissio*, meaning a dismissal. It is certain that, from the fourth century at least, the words *Ite missa est*, conveying a permission or direction to depart, were used at certain parts of the Divine offices. They were used, for example, when it was time for the catechumens to leave the oratory—they not being allowed, before their baptism, to assist at the consecration, for fear of danger and of treachery. But it seems also to have been used in very early times as it is now—at the end of Mass—to mark the termination of the function and to indicate to the people that they might depart. A writer of the year 500,¹ makes the interesting statement that the formula was used in the palace and the courts as well as in the Church: "In ecclesiis, palatiisque seu prætoriis *Missa* fieri pronuntiatur, cum populus ab observatione dimittitur". That is, "In churches, and in the emperor's or the prefect's court, *missa est* is pronounced," or, "it is pronounced that the dismissal takes effect"—"when the people are released from attendance". Indeed it cannot be doubted that, in the fifth century at least, but probably long before, the form was equivalent to "the office is over," or "the function is over". We find, for example, in the Rule of St. Benedict, which was written in the first quarter of the sixth century, that the holy Legislator, in fixing the number of psalms and the prayers for prime, tierce, sext and none, vespers and compline, ends in each case with the words *et Missæ fiant*; meaning, there is the end of that canonical hour, and the community will then be dismissed for the time. It is easy to see how

¹ St. Avitus, Archbishop of Vienne, *Ep.* 1.

the term *Missa*, from meaning a dismissal, was used to signify the whole rite. Indeed the word may have been in use before the discipline of the catechumenate prevailed. And this suggests the idea that it may have an origin earlier even than Christianity itself. It is well known that the word *Pompa*, the Greek word *πομπή*, was used before the Christian era, by Greek and Latin writers, to express a religious and also a civil or military solemnity. We find *πομπή* in the *Phædo*; "*Pompa*" many times in Cicero, and Seneca was using it even in Christian times. The word *πομπή* is from the verb *πέμπω*, "I send"; and it has the same relation to *πέμπω* as *Missa* has to *mitto*. If the word *πομπή* therefore is used for a solemn act, or (as we should say) function, there is an *a priori* probability that *Missa*, which is its direct Latin equivalent, would be used in the same sense. You will ask how it was that *πομπή* came to have such a meaning? I am inclined to think that it arose from the fact that the pilgrimages or "missions," sent to distant temples and shrines being of a marked and very solemn kind, gave their name to all such celebrations indifferently, whether they were really "missions" or only home functions. The word is used in the *Phædo* of that embassy to Delphi, whose return Socrates was awaiting before he died. This was a "mission" in the literal sense. And there is at least one very early passage of the Fathers in which the word is used of the Eucharistic Liturgy. This is in the first Apology of Justin Martyr, who uses the words *διὰ λόγου πομπὰς καὶ ὕμνους* in a context which obliged us to translate "rational rites and hymns," and to infer that the word *πομπή* was used of the Liturgy. If this be so, it is almost impossible but that the literal translation, *Missa*, should have been used in the sense.¹ It seems certain that even in the time of

¹ Cf. Muller's brochure, *Missa: Origine et signification de ce mot*.

St. Ambrose († 397) the word *Missa* was employed to signify the whole Eucharistic rite.¹

The Liturgy of the Mass—the rite itself, the most august and prominent observance of the Catholic Church—is one in which it were naturally to be expected that we should find traces of the most remote antiquity, combined with features which show the living impress of every Christian century. There can be no doubt that its outward form has never lost the marks of that Jewish worship in the midst of which the founders of Christianity were born and lived. There is abundant proof that the earliest meetings of the apostles and disciples for the purposes of common prayer were very little different from the meetings in the Jewish Synagogues. Nay, at first it was in the Synagogues themselves that they assembled, joining in the reading and ritual prayer which there went on. When they were cast out of the Synagogues, as they were before long, in Jerusalem, at Damascus, at Pisidia, at Berœa, at Corinth, they held their prayer-meetings in private houses. But there was one part of their worship which, as it will be readily understood, they could not attempt to carry out in any Synagogue. This was the Eucharistic Liturgy, called in the Acts the “breaking of bread,” which we are told they celebrated “from house to house,” or in the private houses of the faithful. Two distinct types of worship would therefore at first be kept apart—the prayer-meetings, after the manner of the Synagogue, and the Holy Eucharist. When it was finally made clear that the followers of Jesus Christ could no longer join in the worship of the Jewish Church, even then these two types were used independently of each other. It was not always that the meeting for common prayer, even on the first day of the week, included the celebration of the Eucharist. But it is clear that the practice of making the Euchar-

¹Cf. Gühr, *Le Saint Sacrifice*, ii., p. 5.

istic rite follow the prayers and blessings soon became the common rule. We have an example of this in Acts xx., where we see that at Troas the "breaking of bread" is preceded by a service during which St. Paul makes a long exhortation.

Historically, therefore, the rite of the Mass consists of two parts; the preparation of prayer and reading, and the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Both of these show a close connection with the Synagogue and the Temple.

The very name of Synagogue was at first given to the assemblies of the followers of Christ, as we see in the *Pastor* of Hermas. As soon as the Christian Church began to have "meeting houses" distinct from private dwellings, these places of assembly were built, like the Synagogues, on an area which was regarded as holy, and which afforded the means of ritual washing or purification. Within the building, as in the Synagogue, there was a President in his special seat and a "presbytery" of elder men—soon to be known by the distinctive Christian names of Bishop and priests. The faithful were seated on seats or benches, as in the Synagogues, not standing up as in the heathen temples; for, like the Jews, the Christians had to listen to a law and be taught by a teacher. The assembly, in their common prayer, faced the East, as the Jews turned towards Jerusalem. There was a "precentor," and there were "janitors," as in the older worship. The Christian "Churches" carried on the custom of the Sabbath-day meetings, to which they added those of the first day of the week. On those days, they generally met three times in the day, and there were occasional meetings during the week—still according to the Hebrew custom. The service consisted of the reading of the law of Moses and of the Epistles and Gospels, of vernacular exposition, a set sermon, and long and fervent "blessings," or the praise of God with thanksgiving; collections were made, and lights were used, as in the Synagogue.

But even in this part of the primitive Christian ser-

vice the distinctive Christian character speedily displayed itself. First of all, there was the doctrine of Christ, of His person, of His redemption, and of the universal Church which He had founded in the world. Before there were any written Gospels to read we gather that the reading of the Old Law and the Prophets was followed by a sermon on our Blessed Lord's life and death.¹ Later on, the four Gospels themselves were read. In the eloquent and fervent "benedictions" which, as we see in the Apostolic Constitutions, the Church continued to use after the fashion of the Synagogue, the name of Christ is now added, as indeed it is added throughout in all the prayers that are addressed to God. A second novel feature was the use of "Acts" of the Apostles and of the Epistles of St. Paul. A third characteristic of the Christian worship was the exercise of those "gifts" or *χαρίσματα*, which at the beginning of Christianity were so abundantly vouchsafed to the infant Church. That the office of these "prophets" and "doctors" was not confined to Apostolic times is clear from the *Didache*, where they are permitted to utter extemporaneous thanksgivings, a thing which is expressly forbidden to all others.²

There are two features in the "preparation" of the Mass which seem to be wanting in the ritual of the Synagogue—the Kiss of peace, and the Confession. As to the former, there can be no doubt of its being of Apostolic Institution; and its original place, as we are told by St. Justin Martyr, was after the "prayers" and before the bringing in of the "oblata"; that is, at the very end of the preparatory service. There is no evidence that the Christian "Kiss of peace" shocked the feelings of the Jews; nay, there are not wanting some slight indications that the ritual Kiss was practised by the Jews themselves.³ Without doubt, it was adopted by

¹ See Bickel, *Messe und Pascha*, p. 91.

² X. 7.

³ See the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, art. "Salutations".

the founders of the Christian Church to mark that spirit of brotherhood preached by our Lord, and to signify that duty of "being reconciled" to one's brother which He declared must precede all acceptable sacrifice; and indeed it may be that He set the example of it Himself, at the Last Supper, and on other occasions.

The confession of sins was certainly, in some shape, practised in the Eucharistic rite from the earliest times. This may not be quite clear from the injunction of St. Paul: "Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat".¹ But the *Didache* lays down the precept of confession in these words: "Meeting together on the Sunday, break bread and give thanks, having first confessed your sins, that your sacrifice may be holy".² From a comparison of the post-Apostolic monuments, it may be concluded that this Confession was public and formal; but its place in the early centuries was just before the Consecration. There is evidence that the Jews considered that all sacrifice ought to be accompanied by Confession,³ but we do not find that it is a part of the ritual of the Synagogue or the Temple. Even in the Christian Church, Confession was for a long time only slightly emphasised.

The service preparatory to the Eucharistic rite proper, then, originally consisted of Reading, Preaching, Psalmody, Prayer, and the Kiss of Peace. There is no proof that the Apostles established any strict or definite order in this service. Whilst they still remained at Jerusalem, they would gradually adopt into the old Jewish ritual the additions and alterations which were now required, the general type remaining the same. As the Church spread, the various founders and leaders, whilst adhering to Apostolic institution, would consider themselves at liberty to modify details, according to circumstances.

The second half of the Mass—that part of the great

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 28.

² XIV. 1.

³ Morinus, *De Pœnitentia*, lib. ii., cap. xxi., n. 4.

action which contains the Sacrifice itself—presents, like the first part, interesting associations with the worship of the chosen race. The “breaking of Bread,” as it was at first called, was never celebrated in the Temple, or in any Synagogue. We do not know how the Apostles performed this distinctive Christian rite. But it is not very difficult to guess, if we study the Epistles of St. Paul and the earliest liturgical indications. They seem to have adopted the ceremonial of the Paschal Supper. Now at the Supper of the Passover, in the time of our Lord, the solemn part began with the bringing in of Bread and Wine; the Bread was placed on the table, the cup was tempered with water and was made ready to be drunk. Then the Psalms cxiii.-cxviii., which were called the *Hallel*, were chanted or recited. The ritual washing of hands took place. There was a kind of “preface” expressing the praise of God, ending with the “Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God of Hosts”. The great Psalm of the *Hallel*—the *Confitemini Domino*—was then continued, and it was at this point that our Lord, taking the Bread and Wine, instituted His Divine Sacrament. Then the Psalm of the *Hallel* was finished—the Bread was broken and consumed and the Cup was received. Nothing was more natural than that the Apostles should carry on this ritual for the celebration of the Eucharist. But it is to be observed that the Psalms of the *Hallel* nowhere appear in any fragment of Christian liturgy that has come down to us. This is what we should naturally expect. These Psalms were prophetic; they belonged to the type rather than to the fulfilment. In their place we find Christian forms of worship, praise, intercession and thanksgiving, which are at first florid, abundant and Oriental, but which afterwards, in the West at least, settled down into that series of prayers that begins with the *Te igitur* and ends before the *Pater noster*, and forms with the words of institution the Canon of the Mass. We cannot be wrong in supposing that the *Pater noster* was in some

way used from the very beginning. The actual breaking of the Bread, and the Communion, with probably the benediction of the President (of which there are very early traces) would conclude the act.

We find that what was at first called the "Breaking of Bread" was named by St. Paul, writing some five and twenty years after the day of Pentecost, "the Eucharist". This seems to be rightly inferred from 1 Cor. xiv. 16: "If thou utterest forms of praise by the Spirit, how shall the unlearned person say the Amen to thy Eucharist, since he knoweth not what thou sayest?" The Apostle is speaking of the uselessness of speaking in unknown tongues, under certain circumstances. Comparing this verse with the two following we have the clear picture of one man "Eucharistising," and the others answering Amen. Not that the word necessarily refers to the act of Consecration alone. But it seems to be already a word dedicated to the principal work that went on in the assemblies of the Christians, at a moment when all unbelievers were excluded.¹

There is nothing that can be called a detailed "Liturgy" until we come to the *Apostolic Constitutions*, and St. Cyril of Jerusalem († 386). St. Cyril gives a fairly minute description of the Mass as said at Jerusalem in the latter half of the fourth century. Before that date nothing has come down to us but hints and fragments. For example, in the *Didache* we have the following direction: "On the Lord's Day, assembling together, break bread and perform the Eucharist ('Eucharistise') after you have confessed your sins that your Sacrifice may be pure".² And some specimens are given of the prayers that are said in the Christian assemblies before the Eucharist. In the Epistle of Barnabas we find the Sunday kept "with rejoicing" in honour of the resurrection. From the first Epistle of St. Clement we

¹ Compare *Monumenta Ecclesiæ Liturgica*, by Dom Cabrol and Dom Leclercq, vol. i., sect. 1.

² XIV.

clearly see that there was an "order" of worship; the προσφορά and the λειτουργία were to be carried out at stated times; we see the "high priest" in his place, with the other priests, and the deacons.¹ The ordering of these things he refers to "the Lord"—which we cannot be wrong in understanding as implying Apostolic institution. The Epistles of St. Ignatius furnish us with a few hints. A man who does not come "within" the Altar of Sacrifice, cannot partake of the "Bread of God". There are common prayers for all men. There are frequent assemblies "for the Eucharist of God". The deacons are ministers, not of meat and drink, but of the mysteries of God. The common Eucharist is the sign of unity; it is the common Table. St. Justin Martyr gives more particulars. The assembly takes place on the Sunday—"the day called 'of the Sun'"; the writings of the Apostles and the Prophets are read; the President gives an earnest exhortation; then all rise and pray (the phrase is εὐχὰς πέμπομεν—make a solemn ritual prayer). Then Bread and Wine and water are brought forth, and the President says solemn prayers and Eucharists (ἀναπέμπει, again) and the people answer Amen; and then the distribution, and communion of the things "eucharistised" is made. Then there is a collection for the poor. In a fragment of Theophilus *Ad Autolycum* we find that prayers are said for the Sovereign. In a passage of Eusebius, who describes prevailing practice, we see that in the Christian sacrifice incense was used. From Clement of Alexandria we learn that the Chalice was mixed with water, and that this mixture "was called the Eucharist";² that the Eucharist (the Bread and Wine) is divided and distributed; that the sacred mysteries are performed chiefly at night.³ In Origen we see the priests standing in their places near the Altar;⁴ the faithful

¹ XL. ² *Paed.*, lib. ii., cap. 2.

⁴ *Exhort. ad Martyrium*, 30.

³ *Stromata*, iv., 22.

lift up their eyes at the moment of Communion; the sources of the Liturgy are in the Evangelists and Apostles; the faithful receive the Eucharist in their hands with the greatest care and reverence; the priests who sacrifice wear special vestures;¹ there was a definite and fixed rite for the Eucharist, which all did not understand.² The faithful, when they pray, rise from their seats. We read of the *consessus sacerdotalis*—the priestly session—an anticipation of the “sanctuary” and “choir”; of the “adornment” of the altar; of a certain elaboration of the chant.³ In Dionysius of Alexandria († 264), we read of the rite of Communion; the faithful “hear” the Eucharist and answer Amen—they approach the sacred Table, stretch out the hand for the sacred food and receive it, and become partakers of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.⁴ From Tertullian († 240) we learn, among other things, that the altar was raised from the floor. St. Cyprian († 258) speaks strongly of the strict duty of observing exactly all that has been handed down by divine institution in regard to the “Sacrament of the Lord’s passion and our redemption,” here stating explicitly what is implied in a score of passages in his writings, that there was in his day a fixed *ritus* in the celebration of the Mass.⁵

Perhaps the feature that stands out most prominently on a comparison of the scattered ritual indications found up to about A.D. 250 is the frequently recurring statement that the Liturgy of the Holy Eucharist was of Apostolic or Divine institution, and that it was unlawful to alter it. It is this undoubted *consensus* of all the writers to whom we have access that makes it quite certain that the earliest detailed liturgies faithfully represent the most ancient and primitive practice. Reading, Preaching, Psalmody, Prayer (public and common), the Kiss of Peace, the bringing in of the Bread and Wine,

¹ *Hom. in Levit.*, iv., 6.

² *Hom. in Num.*, v., n. 1.

³ *In Psalmos*, Migne, P. G., vii., 1071.

⁴ *Ap. Eusebius, Hist. Eccl.*, vii., cap. 5.

⁵ *Ep.*, lxiii., n. 14.

a solemn "Preface," the sacred words of Institution, or the Consecration, the Pater Noster, the breaking and distributing, the Communion, and the blessing of the President — there can be no doubt that these were the component parts of the Mass even in the time of the Apostles. It will be readily understood that the details of the Psalmody and of the "Prayers" were not held to be so binding or so unalterable as the Consecration and the Communion. It was the variation, the simplification, and the transposition of the psalms and prayers that chiefly marked the difference between one "liturgy" and another—and which indeed distinguish the modern Roman Mass from the Mass as said in ancient times.

The Apostolic Constitutions, as we have them now, are a compilation of the end of the fourth century. They reproduce in a more diffuse form some of the "prayers" of the *Didache*. But in the second book, which is not borrowed from the *Didache*, we have a very interesting description of the Christian assembly. The writer is addressing the Bishop, and imagines him to be the captain of a ship. He says, "When thou gatherest together the Church, order the assembly, like the captain of a great ship, with all prudence and discipline. Cause the deacons, like the ship's crew, to arrange the brethren, who may be compared to the rowers, with all order and decency. The building should be oblong, and facing the East, with shrines or chapels on each side at the East end; it should be like a ship. In the midst should be the seat of the Bishop; on either side should be the seats of the presbytery, whilst the deacons should stand ready at hand; for they are like the crew of the ship. At the other end should sit the laity, the women being seated apart in all silence. The readers should be placed on a raised stand in the middle." Then follows the order of the Reading, as described above. All are to stand at the Gospel. Then certain members of the priesthood are

to exhort the people, and last of all the Bishop, "as the captain of the ship". Order is to be kept among the men by door-keepers, among the women by deaconesses; for the writer, whilst he keeps repeating that the Church should be like a ship, goes on to say that it should also resemble a sheep-fold, in which strict order should be kept. This insistence upon order seems to mark the difference between the assemblies of the earliest times, when the prevalence of *charismata* necessarily caused a great freedom of speech to prevail, and the days when the clergy were alone to address the flock. The deacons were further to see that no one whispered, or slept, or laughed, or exchanged nods. After the exhortation, the catechumens and penitents were to go out, and the people, rising and turning to the East were to join in those grand prayers of which we have still a survival in the prayers of Good Friday, and whose place is indicated by the mysterious word *Oremus* before the Offertory, but which, in the modern Mass, have been condensed into the Collects, Secrets and post-Communion. Then directions are given for the rites which more immediately pertain to the Holy Eucharist. We have the Kiss of Peace, the deacon's solemn prayer for the universal Church (represented by the *Te igitur* and following prayers), the Bishop's 'Peace be to you' and blessing; and then the Sacrifice, followed by the Communion of our Lord's Body and precious Blood.¹ The *Pater noster* is not set down in the Apostolic Constitutions.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem († 386) gives the order of the Mass in his fifth Catechism. He only describes it from the moment of the dismissal of the Catechumens. He describes, with appropriate commentaries and reflections, the washing of the hands, the Kiss of Peace, the *Sursum corda* with the Preface and the *Trisagion*, or *Sanctus*, and the *Epiclesis* or invocation of the Holy

¹ Lib. ii., cap. 58.

Spirit. He does not reproduce the words of consecration. It is not quite clear from St. Cyril at what point they were uttered; but in Book viii. of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, we have a long prayer uttered by the Bishop, beginning after the *Sanctus*, giving a long and devout *résumé* of the life and passion of Christ, repeating in its course the words of institution, then making the formal *anamnesis*, or commemoration of the passion, death, resurrection and ascension, and then the *epiclesis*, and continuing without break in an intercession for all states and conditions of men. This no doubt represents the form used at the time of St. Cyril at Jerusalem, but St. Cyril follows the prevailing practice in suppressing the exact words of the great Eucharistic prayer, or prayer of consecration. The *Pater noster* follows in St. Cyril's description. After that he tells us how the sweet and melodious chant of the deacon, "Taste and see how sweet is the Lord," invites the faithful to the Holy Communion; how they are to approach and receive the sacred Body in the hollow of the right hand supported by the left, and how they are to touch their eyes with the Host before partaking of it. And they are to be careful that nothing falls to the ground, and to consider that to drop a single crumb is as serious a matter as the loss of a limb. When the Chalice is presented, they are to bow the head in adoration and to answer "Amen" and to touch their eyes, their forehead and their senses with the moisture of their lips.

Comparing the *Apostolic Constitutions* with the words of St. Cyril, and noting the interesting details and expressions which are found in the almost contemporary writings of Fathers like St. Ambrose, St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom, we have no difficulty in reconstructing a ritual of the Mass which in every important detail and in its whole order and arrangement corresponds with the Roman Mass which is familiar to us. The great liturgies, as we have them in the books, were formed later. It is impossible here to discuss these

liturgies in detail. It is sufficient to say, that whatever may be the differences and varieties which we find between the liturgies of the East and the West, or between the various rites that make up these two grand divisions, their resemblances are far more striking, and indeed are such as to justify us in saying that the Christian liturgy is one and invariable. In all, besides the preparatory readings and prayers, we have the dialogue that leads up to the Preface, the Preface, the *Sanctus*, the recital of the Institution, intercession, memento (*anamnesis*), invocation (*epiclesis*), breaking of the Host, Communion, thanksgiving, and dismissal.¹ All the varieties of the Eastern liturgies are considered by the learned to fall under two chief types, the Syrian type (Jerusalem, or Antioch) and the Egyptian, or Alexandrian. To the former group belong the Liturgy of the Apostolic Constitutions, that of St. James (the Greek and the Syrian) and the Western Liturgies of Mesopotamia and Persia, and the Liturgy of St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom, known as the Liturgy of Constantinople, or the Byzantine Liturgy, still used in the Greek Church. To the latter belong the recently discovered Liturgy of Serapion, the Greek Liturgy of St. Mark, and the Coptic and Abyssinian Liturgies. The different types of liturgy seem, therefore, to be traceable to the great Apostolic centres of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria. But it is very clear that there was much greater liturgical divergence (always within such limits as we have indicated) during the first three centuries, than after the Church became established in the fourth century. During those earlier days the surroundings or settings of the Eucharistic rite must have had a tendency to great variation. Then came a time when the synodical action of the Church, protected by the Empire, was possible, and the great Patriarchal Sees were able to make their influence felt.

¹ See Abbot Cabrol, *Dict. d'Archéologie chrétienne*, art. "Anaphora".

The liturgies, as we know them, began then. Speaking generally, we can follow them as they go from the simple to the more complex. We see the entrance of the celebrant made a very solemn function, accompanied by special chanting. The preparation of the Bread and the Cup assumes a most prominent position; it was carried out, in the Liturgy of Constantinople, at a side altar and formed a kind of ante-Mass by itself. The procession which at the proper moment bore the elements to the great altar was the most striking ceremony of the whole liturgical rite, and so in the Byzantine Liturgy it continues to be till this day. When Churches of a more becoming and noble type came to be possible, we find that before the *iconostasis* or *presbyterium* there was hung a veil, which remained drawn close until the dismissal of the Catechumens. It was then drawn back and the sanctuary displayed. Subsequently, before the Consecration, the veil was again drawn close, and the celebrant with his ministers was shut in and hidden from the people who prayed without. When there were no longer any Catechumens, the veil remained open till it was drawn for the Consecration. There were various other details introduced, such as the recitation of the diptychs, or lists of Saints, and peculiar customs in the distribution of the Holy Communion. As to all this elaboration of ritual, it would appear that the great Apostolic Churches of Antioch, Rome and Alexandria knew very little of it, up to the end of the fourth century, and that after that date the Churches which derived their origin from these centres, and indeed the Apostolic Churches themselves, gradually added one thing to another, up to the time of the religious dissension that marked the seventh century. Catholic ritual in the East then became more fixed, and the greater part of the East adopted or continued to use the Liturgy of Constantinople.¹

¹ See Duchesne, *Origines du Culte chrétien*, p. 64 sqq.

As the Church of Alexandria was founded from Rome by St. Peter himself, it is natural to suppose that the Alexandrian Liturgy was also derived from Rome. But these were the days before "liturgies". As it is, the Eucharistic ritual of the Church of Rome, as we trace it in the obscure remains of the fifth to the seventh centuries, and as we find it more or less complete in the eighth and ninth, presents some very remarkable characters which differentiate it from the Oriental liturgies. There is first the curious difference at the commencement of the Consecration formula. All the Oriental rites without exception have the words *ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ἣ παρεδίδοτο*, *in quâ nocte tradebatur*—"on the night on which He was betrayed". On the other hand, the Roman canon has *Qui pridie quam pateretur*—"Who, the day before He suffered". As the Gallican, Ambrosian, Mozarabic, and Celtic forms of the liturgy here agree with the Roman, the disputed question as to the Eastern or Western origin of these liturgies may perhaps be cleared up in the light of this remarkable fact. Another striking point of distinction between Eastern and Western liturgical practice is that the Eastern liturgies—we are speaking of the time subsequent to the middle of the fourth century—though they varied their arrangements, seldom or never vary their prayer-formulas, whereas the Western Churches, whilst preserving with some rigidity their frame-work, seem to revel in the variety of their prayers, prefaces, and other formulas, not excepting even alterations of the Canon itself. The long and luxuriant prayers of the Eastern liturgies are made to fit every day of the year. The formulas of the Westerns, although in some cases not at all brief and passably florid, are varied with all the ingenuity and fervour of a younger civilisation rejoicing in its faith and its festivals. The Gallican, the Mozarabic and Ambrosian here again show their relationship with the Liturgy of Rome.

It is only in the ninth century that we can find

evidence which enables us to follow the full rite of the Roman Mass, and that only by comparing a great number of documents and fragments. The Sacramentary of St. Gelasius, as we have it now, is by no means a record of what was said or done at Rome in the time of that Pope († 496), but is full of Gallican additions. The Sacramentary of St. Gregory († 590), which, as John the Deacon tells us, that holy Pope formed from the older work of Gelasius, "omitting many things, changing a few, and adding also some," is also known to us only in copies which contain much besides what St. Gregory wrote. But the ordinary of the Mass, which constitutes the first part of the Gregorian Sacramentary, was, in its essential features, the same as that *ordo* or liturgy which is alluded to as already existing in writing by Popes Innocent I., Celestine I., and St. Leo the Great; the same, indeed, as we now have it in the Roman Missal—a service-book which represents the Gregorian Sacramentary better than any codex now surviving.

The various rites of the West—the Ambrosian, the Gallican, the Mozarabic, and the Celtic—seem to have come from the same source as the Roman Mass of the fourth century, and then to have assumed such divergencies as we now recognise—and they are considerable—during the times of the break up of the Roman Empire, when the Roman See naturally found it difficult to keep up communications with Lyons, Seville and even with Milan, not to say Armagh and Iona. The establishment of the Carlovingian "Empire" in the ninth century marks the moment when the Roman Church began to have throughout Europe that effective influence on the details of Catholic worship which it had always had in essential matters of faith and discipline. Charlemagne († 814) following in the steps of his father, prescribed the use of the Roman Mass throughout his dominions. "Let every priest," says the famous Capitulary, "celebrate Mass after the Roman *ordo* with

sandals".¹ Beyond the limits of the Roman Empire other forms lingered, as in Spain, and even within these limits, as at Milan, Aix and Lyons. Some of these still remain, in the Ambrosian and Mozarabic rituals. But the numerous "uses" which prevailed up to the time of the Council of Trent, in various leading Episcopal Sees of France, Germany and England, and among religious Orders, such as the Dominicans, the Carmelites, etc., show in most cases only slight and unimportant variations from the Roman Mass. These variations, however, which had grown and multiplied by lapse of time, by the exercise of the discretion of individual Bishops, and the impossibility of controlling manuscript service books, were of a sufficiently grave nature to occupy the attention of the Council of Trent. When the Council broke up, the commissioners whom it had appointed to report upon the Missal and Breviary continued their labours in Rome under Pope Pius IV, and the work went on, with a fresh body of examiners, under St. Pius V. The latter Pope published, in July, 1570, the celebrated Bull by which the Roman Missal, as corrected and published by himself, was thenceforward to be followed throughout the whole Western Church, by all who used the Roman Rite. Two exceptions only were recognised, first, where a custom had a prescription of at least two hundred years, and, secondly, where any particular usage had been explicitly authorised by the Holy See itself. The effect of this Bull was very great. The whole of Italy and Sicily, except the great Church of Milan, adopted the new Missal at once. Spain, except Toledo, and Portugal were not long in following. Austria, Hungary, Poland, Catholic Germany, Ireland and the remnants of Catholicism in England and in the Protestant States of Europe, conformed by degrees. In France, between 1580 and 1590, most of the metropolitans held

¹ Lib. v., cap. 71.

Councils of their Province in order to deliberate on the new Bull. Only in the Provinces of Bordeaux and Toulouse, and in Brittany, was it adopted completely. But throughout the whole country it was resolved to "correct" the local Missals by that now published. At the same time it was recognised that whenever it was desired to change a rite, henceforward the change must be on the lines of the Missal of Pius V. Practically, however, the French Church did not receive the Roman Missal for more than two centuries and a half after the publication of the Bull. The Mass, indeed, was everywhere the same Mass as the Church of Rome. The divergencies were those of ceremonial, shape of vestments, genuflexions, the use of lights and incense, and, above all, the text of the Collects, the Epistles and Gospels, and the calendar. Every Bishop seems to have thought he could lawfully prescribe or approve in non-essentials. What is more, the Holy See tolerated, as it would seem, this state of things.¹

In August, 1842, Pope Gregory XVI. addressed a Letter to Gousset, Archbishop of Rheims, which may be said to mark the beginning of a new era. The Holy Father, whilst expressing his grief that the ritual divergence in France was growing more marked than ever, points out the difficulty of interfering under the circumstances. At the same time, he states it to be his ardent wish that the Missal of Pius V. should be everywhere adopted, and he cordially encourages the Archbishop in his efforts to bring this about. The next year, Dom Guéranger, Abbot of Solesmes, began his campaign on behalf of Roman ritual. In that ritual all France is now united. She has her special

¹ So late as 1828 we find a Bishop of Versailles, a diocese then recently formed out of portions of seven other dioceses, throwing his whole energy into the composition of a *proprium* for his diocese, and composing Collects, Hymns, Lectons and a calendar. At that time, as Bishop Dupanloup says, no one either in France or at Rome dreamt of the introduction into France of the Roman Liturgy. See *La Vie de Mgr. Borderies*, p. 388.

festivals and Collects, Lessons, etc., proper to her own saints, as every other Church has. But her offices and Mass are in all things except this the same as those of the Roman Missal and Breviary.

In England the first indication we have of a Eucharistic liturgy makes it very clear what was the source or exemplar of the Mass in this country. St. Gregory writes thus to St. Augustine, who had asked him what *consuetudo missarum* he was to follow: "Your fraternity knows the *consuetudo* of the Roman Church, in which you remember that you were brought up. But it is my wish that, whether in Rome or in Gaul, if you have found anything which may be more pleasing to God, you carefully make note of it, and that you import into the Church of the English, which is as yet new to the Faith, whatever you have been able to gather from many Churches. For we must not value customs for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good customs. Choose, therefore, from any Churches whatever the things that are pious, that are religious and that are right, and making, as it were, a bundle or sheaf thereof, give them to the English, to be adopted by them as their *consuetudo*."¹ St. Gregory, it must be noted, is speaking, not of the Canon of the Mass, but of the customs and observances which, in one shape or another, must cluster round the Canon. In his days, these latter were not defined by any rigid rule, as in our own times. Even at Rome, where they seem to have been more or less fixed, there is no evidence that they were written down. The Mass brought by St. Augustine to England was therefore the Roman Mass, with "customs" either Roman or adopted. This may serve as a description of the Mass in this country for a thousand years. The Council of Cloveshoe, a century and a half after St. Augustine, orders that all Masses be said after the standard or "example" which they

¹ Ven. Bede, *Hist. Eccl.*, lib. i., cap. 27.

had in writing from the Roman Church. We learn from a letter of Archbishop Egbert of York, about the same date, that a *liber missalis*, or missal, was actually sent by St. Gregory, whom he calls our master (*didascalus*), through St. Augustine, our *paedagogus*.¹ St. Osmund, in the eleventh century, collected and compared English "customs," and formed the Missal which is called the "use" of Sarum, imposing it by his authority and that of the Crown upon the South and West of England. Other English "uses" were those of York, Bangor and Hereford. After 1553 there was for a time no further question of a Missal for England. Had Cardinal Pole's "reconciliation" endured and the country gone back to its old faith, the old "uses" would probably have disappeared, for it is curious that we find, even in Queen Mary's reign, numbers of the clergy asking to be allowed to use the Roman Breviary—and that nearly twenty years before the Bulls of Pius V. The restored Church in England, it need not be said, uses the Roman Missal, with her own *proprium*. Had the Vatican Council lasted, many changes, of greater or less importance, would have been made in the Missal; some of them have been carried out by the late Pope.

¹ See *The Missal of St Augustine's Abbey*, by Martin Rule. He describes a manuscript in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, probably transcribed about A.D. 1100, which he considers to be a copy of the very missal of St. Gregory.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MASS AT THE PRESENT DAY.

IN the present chapter it is proposed to consider in some detail the ritual of the Eucharistic Sacrifice as it is found at the present day in the Western Church ; in other words the present "Roman" Mass. That rite, whilst it presents an unmistakable affinity to the descriptions of the Eucharistic celebration which we are able to gather from the most ancient sources, nevertheless has many features the history and significance of which it is not always easy to trace or explain. Survivals of very early practice, modifications of primitive observance caused by doctrinal explicitness, abbreviations made for the greater convenience of the faithful, additions, devotional and practical, which the living Church has from time to time sanctioned and adopted—all are to be found in the modern Mass, and it is necessary for priests and the instructed laity to be able to follow them.

When we speak of the Western Mass, we speak, as it need not be explained, of the Mass of the Roman Church, which is virtually universal in the West. And it will be more convenient, and indeed more logical, to speak of High Mass rather than of Low Mass. The latter is a later modification, brought about by omissions and abbreviations. The Mass from the beginning was chanted, and the officiating Bishop was attended by ministers. It may seem strange to assert that in

Apostolic times or in the catacombs, the Mass was "solemn". But from the beginning there were, as in the Synagogue, psalms, hymns, and solemn prayers of a more or less formal nature with some kind of chant—and there were ministers. Before the date of the regular liturgies, no doubt there was a certain freedom on the part of the Bishops, when necessity called for it, in abbreviating.

But as soon as the Church emerged from the persecutions, various liturgies were elaborated in great ecclesiastical centres. These liturgies, which embraced the various primitive features described in the preceding chapter, provided for a considerable amount of chanting and made use of deacons and inferior ministers—not as if these were new features, but as if now, at last, the Church was able to have without interference the Holy Sacrifice with the surroundings which had been prescribed by the Apostles themselves. In this sense the Mass only attained its normal condition when Christianity became a public and recognised religion. But the great liturgies did not indicate a transition from Low Mass to High Mass. It was rather that the Mass was high, or solemn, from the beginning, but that too often, for the first three hundred years, it had to be celebrated in suppressed tones, in obscurity, in haste and with the omission of non-essentials.

One of the most striking features of the Western Mass is the use of the Latin tongue. This usage, as it need not be said, is derived from the Church of Rome, the mistress, and, to a large extent, the founder of the Churches of the West. But at what period the liturgy of the Roman Church herself first began to be celebrated in Latin is by no means clear. There seems to be no reason for doubting that the Eucharistic Liturgy in Apostolic and sub-Apostolic times was in the language of the people. The Hebrew, indeed, which the Apostles must have used for the Psalms and Canticles was of an archaic type, and neither spoken nor perhaps well

understood by the first converts. But as the Church began to spread, the Christian community became, as to far the larger part, a Greek community, and the liturgical prayers were soon universally said in Greek. Even in Rome there can be little doubt that the Mass was first said in Greek. At what period the Greek was displaced by the Latin, and whether Greek was ever used in the ancient Church of Africa, it is very difficult to decide. Perhaps the Greek may have been given up at the moment when the imperial Court abandoned Rome for Constantinople, and carried with it the greater part of the culture and wealth of the city. St. Silvester († 335) spoke Greek; St. Leo the Great († 461) did not. The Latin Mass, therefore, was probably established by the beginning of the fifth century. It retained many traces of the older language—as indeed it does to some extent at the present day, in the *Kyrie eleison* and other forms. In the south of Italy and the south of France the Greek Liturgy lingered longer than in Rome itself. But this was because in those regions there was a large Greek element in the population. The interesting Abbey of Grotta Ferrata, which has existed for a thousand years with its wholly Greek language and ritual, is the sole survivor of the numerous Greek colonies which have left their history, with their names, on the south and south-east of the Italian peninsula.

The Roman Church, having adopted the Latin tongue for her liturgical offices, has never allowed it to be superseded. This is not because she desires to veil her rites in mystery, or to keep them from being understood by the people. Other things being equal, it is not too much to say that the Church would prefer to have her liturgy in the vernacular. The words of the Council of Trent are noteworthy and instructive. "Although," says the Council, "the Mass contains much instruction for the faithful, nevertheless it hath not seemed good to the Fathers of the Council that it

should everywhere be celebrated in the vulgar tongue. Wherefore, in every place the ancient rite of each Church, as approved by the Holy See, being retained . . . the Holy Synod commands pastors and all having care of souls frequently, during the Mass itself, to explain some portion thereof, and among other things to set forth some of the mysteries of the holy Sacrifice—and that especially on Sundays and holy days.”¹ To this we may add the directions given to the clergy in the “Order of holding a Synod,” as laid down in the *Pontificale Romanum*: “Let each of you have at hand the exposition of the Creed and of the Lord’s Prayer according to the traditions of the orthodox Fathers; these, and the prayers of the Mass, and the Epistles, the Gospels and the Canon, let him thoroughly understand, and by preaching thereon let him sedulously instruct the flock committed to him, and especially when that flock is deficient in the Faith”.

To any one who looks calmly at this question, it will appear evident that the use of one unchanging and universal language in the Liturgy was a moral necessity, if there was such a thing as one universal Church.² The forms and prayers of the Liturgy are intimately connected with the Faith. Just as the Church’s canons and definitions must be expressed in an official language that must remain the same through all the alterations of written and spoken tongues that time may bring about or diversity of nationality develop, so her liturgy, which embodies great dogmatic truths that every age and country must acknowledge and make use of day by day, must be expressed in an idiom which will not be exposed to the danger and inconveniences of perpetual

¹ Sess. xxii., ch. 8.

² It is true that there are several liturgical languages recognised by the Church. About a dozen are reckoned. But the greater number are used by a mere handful of Catholics, and are little more than picturesque survivals. At one time Greek divided the Church with Latin. Two, or even more, widespread liturgical languages would not essentially affect the principles contended for in the text.

change. Had the Church from the beginning adopted the principle of a vernacular Liturgy for each nation or people, one of two things would, by this time, have happened in every case; either the original liturgical forms would be as obsolete and as difficult for the people to follow as the English of Alfred or the French of the early Normans, or else there would have had to be alterations and adaptations in every century. Now it would have been morally impossible thus to keep the liturgical prayers on a level with the changing and developing language of the peoples of Europe. The task would have been too vast, and too hard to organise. Misunderstanding, heterodoxy, heresy, arising from the incompetence or the wilfulness of translators and adaptors, would have taxed the vigilance of the Church's pastors to such an extent that disaster would only have been averted by a standing miracle. The spirit of nationalism, which must always be one of the dangers against which the one universal Church has to contend, would have found in the manipulation of a vernacular liturgy endless opportunities for loosening the bonds of unity. As it is, the Latin unites the Western Church together in one Catholic body with a union which is that of a family or a household. Every Catholic is at home in every Catholic Church of the world. Moreover, the Latin keeps the whole Church in union with the See of Rome, the source and principle of Catholic unity. The grand dogmas on which the Liturgy rests, and which are interwoven in its very substance, remain for all generations in that form of sacred words which the teaching Church has authorised. Unity of belief and fixity of expression must always be found together.

There is no reason why a non-vernacular liturgy should be an insurmountable obstacle to the devout following of the liturgy by the people. The liturgy is the expression of worship. It is, on the one hand, the performance of certain acts by the priest, and, on the other, the intelligent and emotional participation in

those acts by the rest of the worshippers. The priest, no doubt, should understand all that he does and says. But even the priest might accomplish his work of liturgical duty and worship without the appreciation of all the details of his office. Worship, whilst it rests on words and acts, and is often intensified by them, goes beyond them, rises above them, and when it is in any way fervent, loses touch with the very words and acts from which it took its beginning and its direction. Word succeeds word—but the movement of the heart which one word may inspire is often too expansive to take note of the word that succeeds. Action follows action—but the heart takes in at a sweep the significance of a whole series of actions, and whilst the details go on externally, lifts itself to God by their spiritual quintessential force. If a man worship with a psalm or a hymn, he does not dwell upon every word, or even realise every word. If he lifts his hands to his heavenly Father, or helps to carry the Ark of the Covenant, he need not advert to every bending of the bodily articulations, or even understand the rings of gold and the poles of cedar that he makes use of. It may be thus with the priest. He may well understand all the great features of the Mass, without being able to explain every word or gesture. But the priest has rules and laws for himself, and holy Church rightly charges him to know both the language and the ceremonial of the Mass.

As for the people, it is abundantly possible for them to understand and follow the Mass without either knowing Latin or possessing minute knowledge of the ceremonies. The Mass has broad features, which are easily brought within the comprehension of the least cultivated minds. It is easy to make the faithful realise what is the central point of the Mass—the consecration of our Lord's Body and Blood. It is easy to point out how certain actions lead up to this, and certain others follow it. The preparation or confession, the reading of prayers and of Holy Scripture, the bringing on and

oblation of the Bread and Wine, the Preface, the Sanctus and the Canon—these features, with preliminary explanation, can easily be followed with or without a book. After the Consecration, there is no difficulty in recognising the “Our Father,” the *Agnus Dei*, and the Communion. Every Catholic is carefully taught these things from childhood. It is the Church’s direction, as we have seen, that hardly a Sunday should pass, in a public church, without the attention of the faithful being drawn to some mystery of the Mass or some portion of its ceremonial. Besides this, the whole office and rite of the Mass is translated and explained in books of every degree of simplicity or elaborateness. There can be no question, therefore, that the most uninstructed Catholics may, and do, find it perfectly easy to follow the Mass with discernment and devotion. It need not be denied that Catholics may possibly miss, in a Latin service, a certain stimulus to piety arising from the unction and suggestiveness of vernacular words and phrases. But, for all that, the advantages of the Latin liturgy outweigh its drawbacks. And we must not forget that even as regards the language itself few Catholics who habitually attend Mass are entirely without understanding. Many words, phrases and forms—and these among the most important and weighty—become familiar, and do not fail to carry with them that devout suggestion which holy words afford. Catholics in the Latin countries of Europe—in Italy, Spain, and even France—are enabled, by their own language, to understand, at least roughly, half of the words of the Missal. With England and Germany this is not so easy. But even with us, the better instructed Catholics come to learn the meaning of a great part of the ordinary of the Mass.

The Vestments.—The Council of Trent seems to imply that the Vestments used in the celebration of the Mass are of Apostolic origin.¹ But the passage need

¹ Sess. xxii., cap. 5, *De Sacrificio Missæ*.

not be read in a strict sense. It is doubtless most certain that the "ceremonies" of the Holy Sacrifice, such as lights, incense and vestments, are derived, if not from Apostolic institution, at least from Apostolic principles. In the Roman Church, until the fifth or sixth century, and perhaps later, the vestments used by priests in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist did not differ in form or description from those in common use in the upper classes of society. And yet it is certain, from early documents, that both the celebrant and the laity who were present, were expected to wear special, and not everyday, garments in assisting at so august a rite. The legend of the Roman Breviary which attributes to Pope St. Stephen († 257) the order that priests and deacons were never to use sacred vestments except in the Church, is of more than doubtful authenticity. But we find St. Clement of Alexandria speaking of a garb "befitting the sobriety of Christians". He is not probably referring to anything distinctly liturgical, but to the custom prevailing at that day by which "philosophers" and others indicated what they were by a particular dress. Still, it would only be a short step from a distinctive dress in general to a distinctive dress for the liturgy. Origen, in one of those fragments on Leviticus which have come down to us in a Latin translation, observes that "the priest uses one kind of vesture in the ministry of Sacrifice, and another when he presents himself before the people".¹ And he names explicitly the linen robe, as typical of purity. A curious passage in the *Pastor* of Hermas († 155) represents an aged woman seated on a white chair covered with snowy wool, in most resplendent raiment, reading from a book.² This aged woman, he is informed, is the Church. It is difficult to help seeing that the figure in splendid raiment, seated on this "throne" or cathedra, which is presently removed by four young men to-

¹ *Hom.*, iv., 6.

² *Vis.*, i., c. 2, 2.

wards the East, is a representation of what the Shepherd was in the habit of seeing in the Christian assemblies. No distinct type of vesture is indicated, but we are made to notice the splendour, that is, the shining whiteness, of that which is worn. In another passage this author, who is acknowledged to have written before the middle of the second century, represents the Shepherd as sitting down "in the place of the Angel," and saying to him (the writer): "'Gird thyself with the alb, and minister to me.' And he girded himself with a clean alb, made of coarse linen." The vesture here translated alb was the tunic, in one or other of its forms, as worn commonly.¹ Tertullian († 240) speaks of the custom, which he does not seem to approve, of spreading out, not only the hands, but also the "cloak," when praying in the assemblies.² "Cloak" stands here for the outer vesture (not the *toga*) commonly in use. In the "Liturgy of St. Clement" which is given in the so-called Apostolic Constitutions (about A.D. 400) when the sacred ministers take their places, the deacons are to be "lightly and conveniently clad,"—as if the vestment of ceremony, *viz.*, the cloak, or outward robe, was to be dispensed with in their case.³ These and similar obscure indications scattered through the first four centuries would seem to make it fairly certain that, up to the fifth century, there were no distinctive vestments used in the sacred liturgy, but that it was expected that the vestments worn—*viz.*, the garments used by honourable persons at that period—should be "clean" and excellent. St. Jerome († 420), in his commentary on Ezechiel, takes occasion from the exhortations made by the Prophet to the Levites to impress upon his readers that "they should not enter the holy of holies in every day garments soiled by the common uses of life, but should assist at the

¹ ὠμόλινον—sabanum.

² *De Oratione*, 14.

³ *Constitutiones Apostolicæ*, lib. ii., cap. 57.

sacraments of the Lord with clean consciences and clean clothing".¹ It was about this time that Pope Celestine († 432) wrote to the Bishops of Provence, censuring in express words the use of a special ecclesiastical costume. This letter seems to prove that, in the Roman Church at least, distinctive liturgical vestments were not in use at the beginning of the fifth century.

Nevertheless we may put it down as certain that before A.D. 600, even in Rome, such vestments began to be used. They may be divided into two classes or descriptions. First, there were those which in earlier times had been the ordinary clothing (of the better class); and, secondly, there were vestures which, although worn in the Greek or Roman world, were not so commonly used, but were more or less the ensigns of office or rank. Under the first head come the Tunic or Alb, with the Girdle, the Dalmatic, and the Chasuble. The Tunic was the white woollen or linen garment next the skin. This, in its various forms, short and long, became the Alb, the Surplice, etc. The Dalmatic was only the Tunic of a more substantial shape and richer materials—an upper or outer Tunic, adapted for public wear and ceremonial distinction. The Chasuble (*planneta*, *pænula*, *amphibalum*, *casula*) was the cloak, or over-robe, very wide, without sleeves, and made of substantial and sometimes rich materials, in bright colours, which all classes wore when the occasion required it.

These three vestures by the seventh century had become more or less archaic. Not that people could do without some kind of a tunic, or some kind of an outdoor covering. But, as regards the tunic, the custom had long prevailed of having a special "tunic" for the liturgy; and the ecclesiastical development of this white garment proceeded on lines not at all the same as were followed by its mundane type. Then the Dalmatic

¹ In *Ezech.*, cap. xliv., 17.

or more ceremonial upper tunic, began, in its own way, to be adapted to liturgical uses, by its ornamentation and material. The great outer garment, which, in various forms and materials, had been used both for ordinary purposes of travel, defence against weather, etc., and for ceremonial occasions, such as the banquet, the theatre, and the liturgical assembly, was retained by the Church after the break up of the Roman empire had put an end (in the West) to vestiary traditions, and the barbarians brought on the scene their coarse tunics and short cloaks.

The other class of vestments is typified by the *Ora-rium* or Stole, and the *Pallium*. These, when adopted by the Church, were rather badges or decorations than garments.

We gather from St. Isidore of Seville († 636), from the letters of St. Germanus of Paris (about 576) and other sources, that the vestments now in use in the Mass were already used in the Western Church in the sixth and seventh centuries. In the Sacramentary of Hadrian (that is, the Gregorian Sacramentary re-edited in the eighth century) we can trace the rise of that devotional connection of the vestments of the Christian liturgy with the ritual of the Temple which was made too much of by mediæval writers. The well-known treatise of Amalarius of Metz († 840) *De Ecclesiasticis Officiis* shows the vestments firmly established and gives utterance to the devotional views of that generation.

A few words on the Mass-vestments in detail may now be given.

The Amice (*amictus*) is now the first ornament that the priest assumes when vesting for Mass. The Amice is the latest of all, in point of date. There seems to be no certain reference to it earlier than that which we find in Amalarius, who says that it is "our first vestment—with which we wrap the neck all round". He adds that it mystically signified the "due repression of the voice" (*castigatio vocis*) a phrase which is in the present text of the Roman Pontifical. The

Amice seems to have been introduced on the purely utilitarian ground of the protection or concealment of a bare neck. It was meant to supplement the Alb. In an ancient Mozarabic Ordo, belonging to the eleventh century, whose contents are, however, two or three hundred years older at least, we find a prayer at the putting on of the Amice; and the rubric is *ad amictum sive alba (sic)* as if the two formed one garment.¹

The Alb, as we have said, is the lengthening of the linen under-tunic. But the significance and symbolism of a pure white robe is clearly seen in the history of the Church, from the Apocalypse downwards. The wearing of such a robe was even a feature of pagan religious rites, and was, when Christian history began, a well-known and indeed universal practice in many solemn circumstances of social and ritual importance. There can be no doubt that, from the earliest times, it was the practice among Christians, and especially the clergy, to wear a spotless white robe at the Eucharistic Liturgy. This may safely be said to be the oldest of liturgical vestments. Cassiodorus († 570), commenting on Apocalypse, i., 13, says that the *Poderes*, or garment reaching to the feet, "clearly appertains to the Priesthood".² St. Irenæus († 202) makes a similar remark, when speaking of this vesture.³

Of the history of the Chasuble we have already spoken. In the early Middle Ages it was still the great outer garment which in the Roman imperial times had succeeded to the discarded *toga*—covering the rest of the dress completely and, when not held up, descending to the ground. It soon came to be considered as the distinctive mark of the priestly office. But in ministration it was so much in the way that it had to be held up by the deacon at the more solemn moments of the Mass. It gradually grew smaller, and

¹ *Monumenta Ecclesiæ Liturgica*, vol. v., p. 230.

² *Complexiones in Apocalypsin*, iii.

³ IV., 20.

was made to cover only the back and front, the arms being left free. Benedict XIV. describes a picture of the tenth century once on the walls of the Lateran Basilica, but now known only by a reproduction in an archæological work, which shows the Chasuble open under each arm and terminating before and behind in a peak.¹ Père Le Brun tells us that in his time, that is, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the great mediæval Chasubles were still sometimes used in Paris, at Notre Dame, St. Denis, and other churches, by priests who did not object to the inconvenience of them.² But the Chasuble which figures in the frontispiece of his work (ed. 1787), is typically "French," and shows upon the priest's back like an oblong board.

Nothing need be said about the Girdle (*cingulum*), which must always have been necessary to prevent the long linen robe from being in the way of the feet.

The Stole (*stola*) has a very curious history. Some hold that it began by being merely a handkerchief. The word *Orarium*, by which it is at first known, meant a kerchief, first adopted for purposes of convenience in wiping the face and hands, but found in imperial times to be attached to the dress for ornament, and for what we may call "fancy" uses (such as applause in the theatre), and becoming, according to the universal law in such cases, more and more a thing of ceremony and even a mark of rank or position. It was already in the seventh century in use in the Western Church. In Rome, however, as we are assured by Mgr. Duchesne, it was never taken up as a distinctively liturgical ornament until very much later, perhaps the twelfth century.³

We see it first as a long, narrow decorated piece of stuff, flying loose from the shoulder, or hanging down on one side. Then it is concealed under the tunic, fastened under the arm, or crossed in front—according to the ideas

¹ *De Sacrificio Missæ*, lib. 1, cap. 8, n. 14.

² *Cérémonies de la Messe*, tom. i., p. 52.

³ *Origines du Culte chrétien*, ed. 1902, p. 390.

that developed as to its significance when worn by the different grades of the ministry. In the early Middle Ages, the Stole was expected to be worn always and everywhere, by Bishops, priests and deacons, after the prescribed fashion, so that the liturgical rank of each might be visible to all. But this seems soon to have fallen into disuse. The custom was retained longer by Bishops. We read that St. Thomas of Canterbury († 1170) always carried his Stole upon his neck. Benedict XIV. remarks that in his day the wearing of the Stole habitually was confined to the Sovereign Pontiff. But the Popes have certainly left off this custom now.

The Maniple (*manipulum*, *mappula*) is another instance of a handkerchief passing into a liturgical ornament. But there is this difference, that whereas the *Orarium* was not, in early times, adopted in Rome, we find the use of the Maniple exclusively confined to the Roman Church. The Maniple (*mappula*) is met with in Roman monuments in a form which shows that it was what we should call a *serviette*—used not merely to wipe the face or hands, but to handle things with, or to cover things. When not in use, it was laid aside, or else hung over the left arm. It gradually came to be considered as a liturgical ornament, though there is no representation in Rome of its being worn in the sacred ministry regularly before the twelfth century.

The Pallium, like the Stole, was originally, as we have said, rather a badge or ensign than a garment. It was connected with the idea of Roman imperial jurisdiction, and was adopted by the Roman Pontiffs and by them distributed to other Bishops. It was not a cloak, so the name would seem to imply, but a scarf, draped about the bust. Perhaps it may be the survival of the *toga*. It is certain that Roman imperial officials wore it. But the interesting thing is that, probably in the fifth century, the Popes began to use it as a symbol of greater jurisdiction, and as an instrument for conveying the benediction of St. Peter.

Colour of the Liturgical Vestments.—At the present day, the Roman rite uses five different colours for the sacred vestments; white, red, green, purple and black. By far the commonest colour is white. Red is worn on the festival of Pentecost, in the offices of the Passion, and on the feasts of Martyrs; green on common Sundays and ferias; purple in Lent and Advent, and black on Good Friday, and in offices for the dead. At all other times, the colour is white. For a long time after distinctive liturgical vestments became common, white was the only colour used. Then, it would appear, the Roman Church gradually introduced red. In the splendid times of the Middle Ages, the exuberant fancy of the clergy of the great cathedrals and monastic churches began to employ all sorts of colours—green, blue, violet, and intermediate shades. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, as we learn from a Letter of Innocent III., the Roman Church was using all her present colours except purple or violet (which was considered to be a shade of black); but there was considerable liberty and variety in the rest of Christendom.

Since the Council of Trent, the introduction everywhere of the Roman rite has brought with it the Roman colours. But in places where other rites are used, as in the Church of Milan, there are interesting divergences in colour; for example, at Milan the colour of the offices of the Blessed Sacrament is red.

The Altar.—It is certain that in the first three centuries the Christian Church made use of what is called an Altar. The Latin word *Altare* is the Vulgate equivalent for *θυσιαστήριον*, the sacrificial altar. When certain Christian apologists such as Origen, Minucius Felix and Arnobius state, or admit, that Christians have no “images, altars, or temples” they are evidently using these words in the sense of their heathen opponents. They had no “images” like the “idols” of Paganism; no “temples” such as Greece, Syria and Rome knew, where the great building which was the shrine of a

'deity" afforded the occasion of an assembly that met for enjoyment more than for prayer. In the same way, they repudiated the heathen *ara*, or *βωμός*, at which local or individual gods were honoured by varying superstitious rites. This sacrificial "Altar" of the Pagans as distinguished from the mere pedestal on which was placed an idol, was in most instances a huge structure made up of earth, ashes, horns and blood. Nothing could be more abhorrent to Christians.

Even if the words of Hebrews, "We have an Altar (*θυσιαστήριον*) of which they cannot partake who serve the tabernacle"¹ cannot literally be applied to the Eucharistic altar, we have the word used by the earliest Fathers both Greek and Latin, as, for example, St. Ignatius of Antioch, Eusebius of Cæsarea, Tertullian and St. Cyprian. The altars of the primitive ages were perhaps made of wood, like that which tradition ascribes to St. Peter, now in the treasury of the Lateran. The statement that Pope St. Silvester († 335) forbade any altars thenceforth to be made except of stone, although it is in the lessons of the Breviary, is not borne out by any valid evidence. We come across a reference to stone altars in St. Gregory of Nyssa († 396), whilst in the West they were prescribed by a local Council as early as A.D. 517, and by a Capitulary of Charlemagne in 769. The Christian altar, which is essentially, as it need not be said, a table, became in very early times, a tomb as well. The practice of celebrating the Mass over the bodies or the relics of the Saints probably arose from the circumstances under which Mass had to be offered in the Catacombs. The slab over a Martyr's body was so convenient and devotional a table for the Holy Sacrifice that it is no wonder if it was taken advantage of. Then, how could the hearts of those who assisted at such Masses fail to recall that passage of the Apocalypse: "I saw

¹ XIII., 10.

beneath the Altar the souls of those slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they gave".¹ In the poems of Prudentius († 362) we find this holy custom firmly established; the table that holds the great Mystery is also the faithful guardian of the Martyr's body, and the tomb that covers his bones till the Judgment, offers the food of grace to the worshippers.² The *Liber Pontificalis* states that Pope St. Felix I. († 274) made a decree that Mass should be celebrated over the sepulchres of Martyrs. We find St. Ambrose († 397), writing to his sister Marcellina, telling her that the people would never allow him to dedicate a church without relics of the Martyrs.

As soon as peace was given to the Church, and the Cross had triumphed, a Cross was always placed on the top of the *ciborium*, or baldachino, which covered the altar. When there was no ciborium, it soon began to be the custom to place the Cross on the altar, at least during the time of the holy Sacrifice. There is no sign of the placing of a Cross on the altar, however, before the ninth century; and even then, and much later, the Cross (or Crucifix) was generally the Processional Cross which was taken from its shaft and temporarily set upon the altar. We may observe that it is generally admitted that the Christian Cross had no figure of our Lord upon it till about the seventh century.

Till the thirteenth century there were no lights placed upon the altar. The use of lights in churches is primitive. The heathens used lamps to express festal joy, and to honour their idols. The seven-branched candlestick burned in the Temple of Jerusalem. Although we gather from passages in some of the Fathers, such as Tertullian and St. Gregory Nazianzen, that in early times Christian feeling objected to the ceremonial use of lights, as an imitation of Paganism, yet, as this reason became of less force, the

¹ *Apocalypse*, vi. 10.

² *Peristephanon*, Hymn II.

natural and revealed symbolism of light resumed its influence over the Church. By the end of the third century, lights were commonly used in honour of Martyrs. St. Epiphanius († 403), on a journey, recognised a church by the lamp that was burning. St. Paulinus of Nola († 407) speaks of the "bright altars crowned with lamps thickly set," which burned day and night. Lights, as we need not say, had been absolutely necessary in the Catacombs; and as Christian churches for many centuries after Constantine were often very small and dark, it is difficult to say when or where the use of artificial light ceased to be absolutely required. Such a church, for example, as the Saxon building still existing at Bradford-on-Avon could never be used, day or night, without lamps; above all at a time when the offices generally began so early. Besides these considerations we have to take into account the very ancient symbolical use of a light at Baptism, the Paschal candle, and the lights at Tenebræ. The placing of lights upon the altar seems to have immediately developed from the practice of carrying lights or torches when the Eucharistic procession entered the church. In the eighth century, if not earlier, the Bishop was attended by seven *ceroferarii*. These lights were set down about the altar. Two were used at the Gospel. In process of time the candlesticks found their way from the floor to the altar, or the wings of the altar. It is only in the thirteenth century, however, that we find them on the altar. After that, the practice became common. But many churches in France and Germany retained until very recently the usage of placing the candles not on the altar, but on the steps of the predella.¹

The Rite of the Roman Mass.

For our present purpose, the rite of the Mass may be divided into five parts—the Preparation, the Prayers

¹ See the article "Of Six Candles on the Altar," by Edmund Bishop in the *Downside Review* for July, 1906.

and Reading, the Offertory, the Canon and the Communion. It is the variety in sequence and detail of these five divisions that causes the difference of rite in the various liturgies. But they are all to be found in every one of them, and are all primitive and apostolic; and in none of the rites, Eastern or Western, is there anything more than can be justly placed under one of these heads. As we have shown in chapter ix., there cannot be any hesitation in believing that the Apostles themselves celebrated, or "performed the liturgy," as the Acts express it, by going through the series of acts and devotions thus set down. It is hardly necessary to do more than name them in order to show how absolutely the Roman Mass corresponds with every Eucharistic Liturgy of which any historical trace has survived.

The Preparation.—When the priest, standing at the foot of the steps of the predella, recites with his ministers the Psalm, "Judge me, O God," he is carrying on a practice which began immediately after Pentecost, when the Apostles, with the faithful, commenced their assemblies with those Psalms which were accustomed to be said by the Jews, especially at the celebration of the Passover. When, with bowed head, he says the Confiteor, he does what nearly all the liturgies do—confesses his sins and implores the grace of God to make him a worthy minister of the Holy Eucharist. These two elements of the priest's preparation—the saying of Psalms, and the Confession of Sin—have varied in detail. The Psalms set down in the Missal for the priest's private reading, if opportunity serves, and enjoined whenever the Bishop celebrates High Mass, are also a survival of the same primitive custom. It is only at a comparatively recent date that any portion of this preparation has been part of the rubric of the public ritual of the Mass. The Psalm *Judica* is found in the Spanish Missals in the seventh century, but here it occurs immediately before the Pre-

face. It appears at the beginning of the Mass in the eleventh century in Missals both of the Roman Church and of other parts of Europe. But this Psalm, as we learn from St. Ambrose, was recited in the fourth century on the admission of catechumens into the church after their baptism. It will be recognised how apposite, at that moment, would be that verse of the Psalm now used as an antiphon—*Introibo ad altare Deo*—"I will go in to the Altar of God"—in the mouths of those who were about to be made partakers for the first time of the Holy Eucharist. It was not less suitable to express the devotion of the priest who was about to offer the Sacrifice, and thus, by steps which cannot now be distinctly traced, it became part of the rubrical preparation.¹

As we have said, all the liturgies contain the equivalent of the *Confiteor*. In the Apostolic Constitutions we find a long and eloquent prayer in which the celebrant exclaims: "I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned . . . forgive me, O Lord, forgive!"² It is about the end of the thirteenth century that we find in the Roman Liturgy the *Confiteor* in the form in which it is at present recited.

Under the head of Preparation we may include the solemn entrance of the celebrant and his attendants. In early times, when the Psalms of the preparation were all said in private, this entry was accompanied by the Introit, and the *Kyrie Eleison*.

Before speaking of the Introit it will be useful to advert to the use of incense. In the Roman Mass of the eighth century, the celebrant at his entrance is accompanied by ministers bearing smoking censers; and on his first approach to the altar he censes it in the whole of its circuit.

Incense is generally said to be unknown in Christian ceremonial for at least three centuries after our Lord. It is certain that the Apologists and some of the Fathers,

¹ See Le Brun, l. III *sqq.*

² Lib. ii., cap. xxii.

even of the fourth century, repudiate it, on the same grounds as they rejected lights, and "altars," *viz.*, that it was a heathen practice. But there is a curious passage in the compilation which is known as the "Canons of the Apostles," and is certainly of the third century.¹ After laying down the rule that food and other things must not be offered on the altar, it continues: "nor must anything be offered on the altar except oil for the holy lamp and incense (Thymiama) at the time of the oblation (*προσφορὰς*)". As the earliest manuscript of these "Canons" now existing is of the ninth century, it would be difficult to prove that this was not a later addition. On the other hand, no one would ever have thought of inditing such a Canon in the ninth century, or even in the eighth, or seventh, or sixth. There is no dispute, however, as to what we read in (the so-called) Denis the Areopagite (end of fifth century): "The chief priest having made an end of sacred prayer at the divine altar, begins the censuring with it, and goes over the whole circuit of the sacred place".² The ancient "Ordo Romanus" printed by Duchesne³ from a manuscript of the ninth century, shows us the Bishop entering the church for Mass preceded by the sub-deacon with the censer. Nothing, however, is said in this codex of using incense at the Gospel, or when the *oblata* are placed upon the altar; although both these points are stated to be in an "Ordo Romanus" of the seventh century.⁴ In the so-called "Pilgrimage of Sylvia,"⁵ discovered within the last twenty years, there is an interesting note about the use of incense. We are told that when, at cock-crow on Sunday morning, the Bishop and his ministers entered the sanctuary of the *Anastasis* (the Resurrection) already

¹ *Monumenta Ecclesiæ Liturgica*, i., p. 258.

² *De Hierarchia Ecclesiastica*, c. iii., sect. 2.

³ *Origines du Culte chrétien*, p. 456.

⁴ Smith's *Dict. of Christian Antiquities*, art. "Incense".

⁵ This is now attributed to a certain lady from Galicia in Spain, whose name seems to have been Etheria, Egeria or Eucheria.

lighted up by innumerable lamps, after prayer and psalmody, and before the Bishop reads the Gospel to the people—note that this is the Vigil, not the Sunday liturgy—there is incense brought in, and “the whole Basilica of the resurrection is filled with sweet scent”. This fourth century testimony, however, only goes so far as to state that incense was used to perfume the church. It seems certain that it was used for this purpose—perhaps sometimes with an eye to sanitary precautions—much earlier than it was for “censing” persons and things. We have early evidence, also, that it was employed at the burial of Martyrs, and generally at their tombs. These practices, combined with its natural symbolism, its use in the Old Law, and its prominence in the visions of the Apocalypse, are sufficient indications of the process by which, at a period which we may put down as the end of the seventh century, incense was made use of in the Roman and Western liturgies not very differently from the way it is used now.

In the West, the entrance of the officiant with his ministers for the celebration of Mass was from a very early period marked by much solemnity. The Introit was originally the Psalm with antiphon which accompanied his entrance. In the Liturgy of Milan it is called *Ingressa*, a word meaning the same thing as *Introitus*. In English mediæval Missals, and in the Dominican and other rites, it is marked by the name of *Officium*; which some think has arisen from the fact that the whole rite of the Mass was named “ad Missam officium,” and that the last word was carelessly transferred to the Introit alone. The Introit, as we know it, seems to be altogether a Western peculiarity. There is nothing quite like it in any of the Oriental liturgies, for although there are psalms and antiphons introducing the Mass, there is no procession; or at least the procession is not such a marked feature. It would almost appear as if, in the Eastern Liturgies, the celebrant and clergy were expected to do a good deal of the “pre-

paration," vesting, incensing the altar, etc., before the congregation assembled, and so entered the church more quietly; whereas in the West, the entrance was a solemn and remarkable liturgical performance for which the people were expected to be ready in their places. The procession, as in the French churches at the present day, and in many monastic churches, sometimes went round the aisles of the church.

We have put down the *Kyrie eleison* as part of the Preparation.

The *Kyrie* and *Christe eleison* is that ancient form of litany which was the distinguishing feature of the "processions" of the early Church. The Greek and Roman processions, in the heathen days, were always occasions of supplication and invocation. The words *Kyrie eleison* are common in Holy Scripture. For example the verse of St. Matthew xvii. 15, which is only a type of many others, would infallibly suggest their use in Christian prayer. Accordingly we find them in all the liturgies from the earliest times. But at first they were used in connection with longer or shorter prayers of supplication such as abound in the Oriental liturgies. Eventually, in the Roman office, and to some extent in the offices of the East, they were isolated—and used, especially in processions, as the formula of the crowd, either with or without any other forms of supplication—that is, either as a more or less continuous cry, or as a kind of response to the "bidding" of the officiating minister. Thus the stational processions in the city of Rome, in which her liturgy showed itself in a form so august and solemn, were accompanied, even before St. Gregory's time, with the *Kyrie eleison* and the *Christe eleison* many times repeated. In the early Middle Ages the *Kyrie* followed the Introit, but, at first, the repetitions went on till the Bishop by a signal bade them cease. Afterwards, they were fixed as we have them now.

The *Gloria in excelsis* is very probably, in substance,

one of the oldest forms of prayer and praise used by the Catholic Church. We find it in the Apostolic Constitutions, as a "morning prayer". The writer of the treatise *De Virginitate*, erroneously ascribed to St. Athanasius, implies that it was familiar to the religious women of the fifth or sixth century. The Latin form as we now have it, if it was not composed by St. Hilary of Poitiers, was at least known in the eighth century. It appears not to have been introduced into the Mass before the beginning of the seventh century. Yet there is a passage in the letters of St. Germanus of Paris († 587) which may refer to it, though not in its present form. He tells us that at the end of the Gospel, the ministers cried *Gloria tibi Domine*, in the character (*in specie*) of the Angels who at the birth of our Lord exclaimed *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. In the *Sacramentary* of St. Gregory († 604) we find the *Gloria*; and the *Liber Pontificalis* says that it was ordered by Pope St. Symmachus († 263). The latter date is not accepted by historians; but we may say with tolerable certainty that it was used in the Mass at Rome in St. Gregory's time, and in France and Spain only a little later. It is not certain, however, whether it was at first recited in the exact form in which it now appears in the Roman Missal. But we have that form in manuscripts of the eighth century.

The second great division of the Mass we have called *Prayers and Reading*. This includes the Collects, the Epistle, the Gradual, Tract, and Sequence, and the Gospel. These represent, in one way or another, the long readings from the Old and New Testament, and the elaborate prayers, which we find in the ancient liturgies, and which must have been a feature of the "assemblies" even in Apostolic times.¹ At first, it is evident that these things were done without formality. The "President" of the assembly read, or indicated

¹ See the preceding chapter.

for reading, such passages from the Prophets, the Epistles and the Gospels as he thought useful or desirable, or as time permitted, to use the phrase of Justin Martyr. The Psalms were sometimes read by a cantor, and sometimes (later) recited antiphonally by the assembly. The prayers were originally extemporaneous—but forms soon began to be used—forms that had been composed by some more eminent Bishop or reader and carefully set down. One can see in the *Didache* and the Apostolic Constitutions early examples of these prayers. As time went on, when Christians multiplied and the Church organised herself, all these things began to be performed with more formality and ceremony. Not only were rules made for reading and forms of prayer adopted, but the functions of various ministers were defined, places and postures were prescribed, and the relations of the people with the clergy were regulated. When the lector finished, a psalm would begin. When the psalm paused, the officiant would salute the people. When the Gospel had to be read, a procession with chanting was formed to the reading-desk. In these details, church naturally differed from church. But in the West, the "Ordo" of the Roman See prevailed, though not universally, from the days of St. Gregory the Great.

(The oldest liturgies prescribe special solemnities for the reading of the Gospel, and indicate what must have been the primitive feeling on this point. In many parts of the East the Book of the Gospels was brought in with a special rite. Everywhere in the East in the fourth century lights were used when it was publicly read. The oldest "Ordo Romanus," and St. Isidore of Seville, authorities both of about the seventh century, show that the use of lights prevailed also in the West; and we may take it that, at that period, the solemn chanting of the Gospel was accompanied by substantially the same ceremonies as at the present day.

We have evidence that the Creed—probably the

Nicene formula—was recited at Mass in Eastern churches at the beginning of the sixth century, and in Rome and the Gallican churches by the ninth. The story, told of the Emperor Henry (1014) by Abbot Berno, who says he was present, that this Emperor persuaded Pope Benedict VIII. to adopt the Creed in the Mass, whereas hitherto the Roman Church had not used it, must either refer to some particular form of the Creed, or, much more probably, to the substitution of chanting for merely reading.

At this point, the Mass of the Catechumens ended. Or rather, it should be said that it ended before the Creed. But before the Creed had become a "solemnity" of the Mass, it may be said that the Catechumenate had ceased to exist. This may not be altogether true of the Oriental churches. But even if, early in the sixth century, there were Catechumens at Antioch and Constantinople, the Creed when first introduced seems rather to have been a test of orthodoxy than a rite of worship. It was prescribed by Timotheus and Peter the Fuller in churches as it was in councils and other meetings, to keep heretics out. But the usage spread, and, as might have been expected, was gradually transformed into an occasion of triumphant profession. About a century after we hear of its introduction in the East, the young Gothic Church of Spain adopts it. The words of the rescript by which King Reccared enforces the Canon of the Third Council of Toledo (589) read like a prophetic proclamation of the glories of the *Credo* during the Christian ages. It was recited by all the people together, in a loud voice, just before the Holy Communion, "after the manner of the Fathers of the East," and its purpose was "that the people might profess their belief, and thus with hearts purified by faith might present themselves to receive the Body and Blood of Christ".

The Offertory.—The Offertory, in the modern Mass, presents two points for consideration; there is the offer-

ing itself, and there are the prayers which accompany it. The "offering," of the Bread and Wine for the Sacrifice, must have been made from the very beginning. In the Apostolical Constitutions there is a clear allusion to the practice of bringing "gifts," which are not tithes or dues, but which are offered by the priest to God through Jesus Christ for those who bring them.¹ In the ancient document called the *Canones Apostolorum* we find the various kinds of offerings clearly distinguished; nothing is to be offered *upon the altar* except the things for the Sacrifice (that is, the Bread and Wine, and oil for the sacred lamps and incense for the oblation). But it was chiefly Bread and Wine for the Sacrifice that was offered; and these the people were expected to furnish in sufficient amounts for the Eucharist. It was the deacon who received the offerings and placed them on the altar. There was, at first, no distinct "offertory" prayer. The long "Eucharistic" formula, such as we find it in the Clementine Liturgy, included both the "offerings" of the gifts to God, and the consecration of these gifts, by the recital of the formula of Institution, into the Body and Blood of Christ. But in the earliest liturgies of the fifth and sixth centuries we have the verbal "offertory" explicitly formulated, in prayers quite separate from the prayer of Consecration. These prayers, at a very early period—at a date, that is to say, not later than the liturgy which is called St. Chrysostom's—expressly look forward to the consecration, and present the offerings to Almighty God as to be blessed by Him and made into "the mystery of the Body and Blood" of the Only Begotten Son. In the Roman rite there were no special offertory prayers before the eleventh century—although there were, in that and other Western rites, prayers answering to the "Secreta" as said at present, which virtually expressed an offertory.

¹ *Monumenta Ecclesiæ, Liturgica*, i., p. 220.

In the twelfth century the Roman Missal adopted the five prayers as we have them now, *viz.*, *Suscipe, Offerimus tibi, In spiritu humilitatis, Veni sanctificator* and *Suscipe, sancta Trinitas*.

In the ancient Gallican rite, as in the Eastern liturgies, the Bread and Wine were prepared quasi-privately, that is before the solemn entry of the officiating ministers. This usage is still recognisable in the Dominican Mass, although the preparation is made in the sight of the people. The versicle now prescribed to be sung by the choir at the offertory is, in the Roman "Ordo," at least as old as the eighth century. From St. Augustine we learn that it was a novelty in Africa in his day.

The Collect which is called the "Secret," and which always corresponds to the Collect proper and to the Post-Communion, takes us back to the very ancient usage by which, before the commencement of the most solemn part of the Eucharistic office, the celebrant asked the faithful to join him silently in prayer.

The Canon.—The fixed, essential, and most solemn part of the Mass is called the Canon, or the Rule. It begins with the Preface, and ends at the Pater Noster. By Latin writers of the early Middle Ages the Canon was frequently designated "Actio," a name derived from the use of the word "ago" in the sacrifices of the pagan Romans.

The central prayer of the Canon is the commemoration, or recitation of the words of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament. It is certain that this formula has been used in the Eucharistic Liturgy from the very beginning. Justin Martyr, in the middle of the second century, in describing the Eucharistic rite¹ introduces the words of institution. It is pretended by some writers that he does not say explicitly that these words are recited by the "brother who presides". True, he is writing an "apologia," not a ceremonial. But he says

¹ *Apol.*, i., 65.

that the President, besides rendering praise to Almighty God, makes a long "thanksgiving" (εὐχαριστίαν), and that this thanksgiving is made by "the utterance in prayer of the word derived from Jesus Christ," that "word" as he goes on to say, being the words uttered by Him at the Institution, which he sets forth in detail.

This sacred and venerable "commemoration," which thus contains the words of consecration, and which is naturally recognised by the faithful as the most solemn moment of the Mass, is preceded and followed by forms of prayer which are practically as ancient as itself. The Preface, with the thrice-repeated "Holy," stands for that praise of God which we find in all the liturgies, just before the consecration. We have it nearly as it is now in the fifth Catechesis of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in the early part of the fourth century. In St. Cyril we have also intercession for the Church and the world, commemoration of the Communion of Saints, and prayers for the dead. In the modern Roman Mass the *Te igitur* prays for the acceptance of the Sacrifice and for the Church and its prelates. The memento of the living follows. The *Communicantes* unites the faithful with our Lady and the Martyrs and Saints—recalling that recitation of the diptychs which we find, in the Gallican and Eastern liturgies, placed before the Preface. The *Hanc igitur* explicitly takes in the whole of the faithful present as joining in the oblation, and in ancient times it probably enumerated the names of the newly baptised.

The recital of the history of the Institution, which includes the solemn words of consecration, is followed by the *Anamnesis*, or commemoration of the life, death and resurrection of our Lord. The conclusion of this prayer, from the words *Supra quæ* is one of the most mysterious passages in the ritual. It seems to answer to that invocation of the Holy Spirit which in the Greek liturgies is called the ἐπίκλησις. But in this prayer of the Canon no descent of the Holy Spirit is prayed for, but, on the contrary, Almighty God is earnestly im-

plored to have the Sacrifice carried by the hands of His holy Angel to the heavenly altar above. The reference, as no one can doubt, is to the golden altar of the Apocalypse¹ and the action of the Angel who there offers the prayers of the Saints, and scatters the fire of the Altar on the earth. As the Sacrifice is offered and presented by Christ Himself, there is no absolute necessity for imploring the Divine Majesty to accept it. But the ritual prayers of the Mass never lose sight of the fact that the faithful, in their way, offer the Sacrifice as well as the great High Priest. Now the sacrifice of the faithful is not, of itself, secure of acceptance; or, in other words, the blessings of the Mass, though infinite, are applied to the faithful in proportion to the fervour with which they assist. This prayer, therefore, uses the inspired imagery of the Apocalypse—which, however, is not mere imagery, but describes real fact—in order to “confirm” the Sacrifice and to implore the Heavenly Father to make it acceptable and fruitful.

The Canon of the Mass ends at the *Pater noster*. It is abundantly evident that this sacred prayer has been used in the Eucharistic Liturgy from the very beginning. It is found in nearly all the ancient liturgies. It was St. Gregory the Great who ordered the *Pater noster* to be said before the Breaking of the Host. Before his time, in the Roman as in the Greek liturgies, it had immediately preceded the Communion. St. Gregory says that it was not congruous that, whilst admitting, as an accompaniment to the consecration, prayers composed by human authors, they should leave out the prayer of our Lord Himself—the more so, as the Apostles made use of no other prayer.² In the Latin rite, the *Pater* has always been said by the priest

¹ VIII., 3.

² This passage of St. Gregory, *Ep.*, ix., 12 or 26, certainly cannot mean, as Mgr. Duchesne reads it, that the *Pater noster* was the sole liturgical formula. St. Gregory cannot have had any such idea. It must mean that there was no other prayer *besides the prayer of consecration except the Pater noster*.

alone, and aloud; in the Greek liturgies it is recited by the whole body of the people.

In the ancient Roman "Ordo" there were two distinct Breakings of the sacred Host; the first was when the celebrant broke in two one of the two Hosts intended for the Communion of himself and the more dignified clergy, putting one half into the chalice; and the other was when the Hosts for the Communion of the people were carried away from the Altar and broken into convenient particles by the deacons. It was during this latter breaking that it was usual, from about the seventh century, to chant the *Agnus Dei*. As the Hosts for the people are no longer broken, the first breaking alone has survived. The putting of the half of the Host into the chalice was evidently intended to signify the unity of the Sacrament.

The custom of chanting a Communion-anthem dates, like the offertory verse, from about the fourth century. The collect or prayer which follows, now called the Post-Communion, corresponds with the other two "Collects," the Collect proper and the Secret.

The final blessing is ancient and universal. In the Roman Mass it was at first given by the Bishop (or the Sovereign Pontiff) in the course of his processional return to the sacristy. In all the Greek liturgies, from the Apostolic Constitutions (book viii.) downwards there are numerous solemn benedictions marked during the Eucharistic rite; among these we invariably find the dismissal-blessing, to which, in all ages, the faithful have had a great devotion.

The Gospel of St. John began to be recited, in the early Middle Ages, in the Western Church, out of private devotion, by the priest who had celebrated Mass. This first chapter, indeed, of the Gospel of the beloved disciple, which ends with the august formula of the Incarnation, was widely made use of by Catholic devotion, especially in solemn moments and at times of danger. It was made of precept at the end of every Mass by Pope St. Pius V.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FRUITS AND EFFECTS OF THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

IT must always be borne in mind that the Mass is the Sacrifice of Christ, by Christ, for the purpose of bringing the graces of the Redemption of the Cross to the door of all Christ's servants. The oblation of such a Victim by such a Priest might be expected to effect an outpouring of grace that should have no limits. But when human beings in a state of probation are concerned, there must always be limits to the interference and bounty of the Heavenly Father; otherwise the state of probation would abruptly come to an end. The Sacrifice of Calvary, which could, and did in a sense, wash away the sins of the whole human race, does not affect any individual soul unless such individual in some way applies that precious ransom. Such application can only be made by a movement of the reason and the will; and by Christ's order, there must in many cases be submission to an ordinance. No man is saved in spite of himself, or without his own co-operation—a co-operation which, however, is also an effect of Divine grace. It is thus with the Mass. Its fruits and effects are limited by the will of Christ, and by the conditions of the human souls for whom it has been instituted. We cannot argue altogether *a priori* as to what the Mass does for men. We must have recourse to Catholic tradition and the Church's *magisterium*.

Let us first understand in what sense it is said that Christ is the principal Offerer of the Sacrifice of the Mass; in other words, that He is truly a "Priest for ever," and truly exercises His priesthood whenever Mass is celebrated.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, adopting a well-known verse of the 109th Psalm, speaks with emphasis of the perpetual Priesthood of Christ. The Psalmist, with prophetic inspiration, writing of the future Messiah, had put into the mouth of Jehovah the words: "Thou art a Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech".¹ The author of the Epistle uses this phrase to prove that the priesthood of Christ excels that of the Levitical Order, as being more ancient, and as resting upon an institution which was in existence before the law of Moses, and which continued in force after that temporary and provisional law had ceased to bind. The Fathers have taken up the expression, and uniformly insist that Jesus is a "Priest for ever". If He is a "Priest for ever," He must continue to the end of time to perform the functions of a priest—that is, to offer Sacrifice. Possibly it would not follow from this, or from the text of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that Christ, as Priest, must to the end of time offer Sacrifice in a literal sense. It is not clear that the inspired writer of that Epistle is referring to the Sacrifice of the Mass. The allusion to the offering made by Melchisedech—that is, bread and wine—does not necessarily imply that Christ, as Priest, was to offer bread and wine Himself. The writer never draws this consequence. But he says: "(Jesus), for that He continueth for ever, hath an everlasting priesthood, whereby He is able also to save for ever them that come to God by Him; always living to make intercession for us".² Hence, the argument used by many Catholic writers, that because the Epistle to the Hebrews says that Christ is a "Priest

¹ Ps. cix. 4.

² Heb. vii. 24.

for ever," the Mass must be a true Sacrifice, because otherwise Christ would not continue to be a priest, does not seem to be conclusive. He remains a "Priest for ever," by His one Sacrifice of the Cross, and by His continued "intercession," whereby the efficacy of that Sacrifice is applied to souls, to the end of time. This seems all that can be legitimately concluded from the Epistle to the Hebrews. But it is a really Catholic view that the sacrifice of Melchisedech typified the Sacrifice of the Mass. The Council of Trent says that "because by (our Lord's) death His priesthood was not to be extinguished . . . He offered His Body and Blood under the appearances of bread and wine . . . and appointed His Apostles priests of the New Testament . . . thus declaring Himself a Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech".¹ Here, the phrase "order of Melchisedech" is made to include not only all that it signifies in the Epistle to the Hebrews, but also the point of the likeness between Melchisedech's Sacrifice and that of Jesus Christ in the Mass. The Fathers have the same thought. St. Cyprian writes: "In the priesthood of Melchisedech we see prefigured the Sacrament of our Lord's Sacrifice, for . . . Melchisedech, King of Salem, offered bread and wine. . . . This order of Melchisedech takes its designation from that Sacrifice, and cometh down therefrom—that is to say, Melchisedech was a priest of the most high God, he offered bread and wine, and he blessed Abraham. Who was more essentially a priest than our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered sacrifice to God the Father, and offered the very thing that Melchisedech had offered, namely, bread and wine, that is to say, His own Body and Blood?"² Eusebius of Cæsarea, whose *Demonstratio Evangelica* is a most valuable and trustworthy summary of Catholic tradition, points out how wonderful is the prophetic force of Genesis xiv. to one

¹ Sess. xxii., cap. i.

² Ep. 63, *Ad Cæcilium*, No. 4.

who reflects "that our Lord Jesus who is the Christ of God, performs, by His ministers, with the very rite used by Melchisedech, the functions of human priesthood".¹ St. Ambrose lays it down as well-known and accepted that "a type or figure (of the Mass) was as old as the time of Abraham, when Melchisedech offered Sacrifice".² I pass over St. Jerome and St. John Chrysostom; but a short sentence from the *De Civitate Dei* is worth quoting. Commenting on Genesis xiv., St. Augustine says: "There it was that we have the first appearance (or mention) of the Sacrifice that is now offered to God all the world over".³

Our Lord Jesus Christ, then, is a "Priest for ever"—that is, as long as there are human beings in a state of probation, who need propitiation and grace. When time is past, and the judgment is closed, even then, and through all eternity He will be Priest. There will no longer be any Sacrifice in the technical sense, and therefore, in that sense, no priesthood; because, in heaven, the redeemed will not offer victims in God's honour, but will themselves burn as holocausts in the fires of the Beatific Vision. But as that army of the Blessed may, in a wide sense, be said to be an everlasting Sacrifice by the ardour of their worship and the incense of their praise, so their glorious Head and Leader, the Man Christ Jesus, may be said to be the Priest of that great Oblation, directing it, imparting to it all the value that it has, Himself the essential and prevailing element in all the liturgy of the new Jerusalem.

It is by His human nature that our Lord is a Priest; that human nature received the sacerdotal unction at the very moment of the Incarnation. God the Son, as God, could not be a Priest; because a Priest is a mediator and intercessor. God the Son, as man, is a Priest, because just as He took human nature in order that a Man might redeem man, so the chief function of

¹ *Dem. Evang.*, l. 5, cap. 3.

² *Lib. i De Sacr.*, cap. 1.

³ *De Civ. Dei*, l. 16, cap. 22.

His redemption was to be the offering of Himself as a Victim to His heavenly Father.

No priestly ordination was necessary beyond the union of the Humanity in one Person with the divinity. There could not be a Priesthood without the Humanity, but the prerogatives of that human nature flowed from the Divinity. It was in virtue of that union that "all power" was given to the Man Christ Jesus "in heaven and on earth". This power included the office of the priesthood, the prerogative of the institution of Sacraments, and the establishment of a never-failing Church. You find non-Catholic writers maintaining that it was only at His Baptism by John, or in the hour of His Transfiguration, that such powers as these, constituting as they did the essentials of the Messianic office, were given to our Redeemer, or at least were consciously recognised by Him. Both of these views imply a denial of the Divinity of Christ. The fact of His being God gave His humanity every gift that was possible or suitable to it, and at the same time prevented the slightest cloud from resting on His conscious knowledge.

It is not necessary to use many words to show how our Blessed Lord exercised His Priesthood in His blessed death upon the Cross. That death was a true Sacrifice. In the words of the Old and New Testaments it was an "oblation," a "slaying," a "laying down of life," a "propitiation," a "redemption by blood"; and Christ was "a victim, unto an odour of sweetness," who, superseding all the ancient Sacrifices, entered into the Holy place by "His own Blood" once for all. No one offered that sacred Blood but Himself. It was not the hands of those who crucified Him that performed the Sacrifice, nor was it the clamour of the Jews or the directions of those who sent Him to His death. None of these agents intended anything of the sort, nor did they know what they were doing. But it was that human will, re-inforced and intensified by the Divinity

which wrapped it round, which in lowliness, in obedience, and in joyful acceptance, permitted human agents to strike, and intended in that unresisted bloodshed and death to make propitiation for the sins of the world; both "Priest and Lamb of God," as St. Gregory of Nyssa expresses it.¹ In the words of St. Epiphanius, "He Himself is Victim, Sacrifice, Priest, Altar, God, Man, King, Pontiff, Lamb—made all in all for us".² Or, to quote St. Augustine, "He is Priest, Offerer, and Offering".³

It was this Priesthood that, according to the words of prophecy and the teaching of the Catholic Church, He was to exercise to the end of time. He instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, and commanded the Apostles, and, in them, their successors, to "do" this same sacred rite in memory of Him. The Eucharistic Sacrifice is not only a Sacrifice, but it is a relative and representative Sacrifice; it sets forth the Sacrifice of the Cross, and it is the continuation or, we may even say, the repetition of it. It is, therefore, except in some of its details, the same sacrifice. As a thing offered, it is Christ; and it is Christ who offers it. Obviously, it is not Christ who pronounces the words of consecration or carries out the rites of the liturgy. But Christ is the principal Offerer. This means, at least, that He commissions the officiating priest to act for Him, as His minister. Whenever and wherever the Mass is celebrated, Jesus Christ is present by His institution, delegation, and commission, and also, we cannot doubt, by His actual concurrence in the sacrificial acts performed by the priest. When the priest utters the words of consecration, "This is My Body—this is the chalice of My Blood," he is speaking, not in his own name, but in the name of another. It is not as in Baptism, or the other Sacraments, "I baptize thee," "I absolve thee". It is true that in all the Sacraments

¹ Orat. I., *In Christi resurrectionem*, tom. iii., p. 611, Migne, P. G.

² *Haer.*, lv., No. 4.

³ *De Civ. Dei*, cap. 20.

the priest is the minister of Christ. But in the other Sacraments the priest gives to a certain rite the power of conferring grace ; in the Mass, Christ Himself becomes present, and the words of the minister make Him so ; and Christ acts, not by a rite, but by Himself.

But it is a characteristic note of the Mass that it is offered not only by Christ, but by the priest, and by the faithful. First, the priest is a real priest ; a subordinate priest, commissioned by a higher priest—but a priest. The action of the priest, his intention, words and acts, are essential to the Mass ; there would be no Mass without them. Moreover, they are not only a condition *sine quâ non* of the august Sacrifice, but they are the real instrumental cause of all that happens. Thus the priest really sacrifices. Yet it is rather Christ's Sacrifice than that of the priest. No unworthiness or sinfulness on the part of the priest can interfere with the essential completeness and holiness of the Mass ; because what the priest does he does wholly by the commission of Christ. For all that, the priest's power is real ; and once he has been properly ordained, it cannot be taken from him. He may fall into heresy, may be suspended, degraded, and excommunicated, but he always retains the power of consecrating and of sacrificing. He will involve himself in a yet more terrible damnation by presuming to minister against the prohibition of the Church, but what he does will be valid.

The faithful take part in the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice as belonging to the universal Church. The oblation, in the words of the Canon of the Mass, is made not only by the celebrant, but by "the whole family" of Jesus Christ—by the "holy populace" that make up the Church.¹ For the Church is the body of Christ and Christ is the Head of the Church. Whatever Christ does as our leader in worship, prayer and praise, the Church is joined with Him therein. Nay,

¹ *Cuncta familia Tua—plebs Tua sancta.*

we can say the same of propitiation—that applied propitiation which goes on, through the Mass and otherwise, to the end of time; the prayers and deeds of men, if they belong to the Church, have a part, through Christ's bounty, in all that Christ does. Thus the Church shares in the worship, the thanksgiving and the propitiation that Jesus Christ offers in the Mass; those of the faithful who are present at any particular Mass naturally unite in that oblation more intimately and more effectively. Those also have a special share in offering who, by alms or otherwise, procure and promote the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice.

Let us now consider what the Mass does or effects for the souls of men, and what are those fruits or advantages which its daily celebration confers upon those for whom Jesus Christ shed His Blood.

It must never be forgotten that whatever are the benefits of the Mass, they spring wholly and individually from the Sacrifice of the Cross. The Blood of Calvary was the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. In each Mass that precious Blood is virtually poured out afresh, in order to be applied to the souls of men, especially to those for whom the Mass is specifically offered, to the soul of the offerer, and to those who are present.

It is not necessary here to insist that the Mass is a sacrifice of *adoration* and of *thanksgiving*—in other words, latreutical and eucharistic. Its very essence makes it the perpetual homage of the Sacred Heart (united with the Church) to Almighty God. But its Eucharistic character has a special interest. This is the name that our fathers from the beginning gave to the great Christian liturgical rite. There can be no doubt that the origin of the use of that name in order to designate the "breaking of bread" is derived from the New Testament account of the institution. All three Evangelists, and also St. Paul, in relating what

our Lord did, represent Him before He pronounces the hallowing words, as "giving thanks". Every one of them uses the same word, *εὐχαριστήσας*—"having given thanks". The dispensation, therefore, of our Lord's Body and Blood was, to the first Christians, a rite of thanksgiving. Our Lord Himself had marked it as such, the Church adopted the word, and it was appropriated to the central rite of the Catholic Church for ever. It was never meant to express that the Mass was merely a "thanksgiving". When our Blessed Lord lifted His eyes to Heaven and "gave thanks," He performed, as man, a stupendous act of adoring homage, and He at the same time made a propitiation which anticipated, although it depended on, the propitiation of the Cross. All this was included in that elevation of the Sacred Heart which He expressed by the lifting up of His eyes to the heavens. But the words that He used—which are not set down in the Gospel—were words of thanksgiving; words such as were customary in the Jewish Church, as they are now in the Christian, before a meal. They could never be more appropriate than at the moment when the most august of all banquets was about to be set before the disciples of Jesus. The Church has never "broken" that Divine Bread without imitating her Founder in the expressions of thanksgiving with which she has preceded its celebration; and from the very beginning she has called it the Eucharist, or the rite of thanksgiving.

The Catholic Church holds that the Mass, besides being a Sacrifice of homage and thanksgiving, is also, in the proper sense of the word, propitiatory. The Council of Trent places its anathema on those who assert that the Mass is "only a Sacrifice of praise and thanks, or merely a commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Cross, and not propitiatory".¹ This solemn pronouncement

¹ Sess. xxii., can. 3.

reminds us that this question was one of those on which the so-called Reformers held very strong opinions. On their principles, it was impossible to admit that the Lord's Supper was propitiatory, for they denied that it was a Sacrifice. Hence Luther said: "One man's Baptism is of no profit to another man; one man cannot be baptised for another. It is the same with the Eucharist; one man cannot receive for another. Therefore the Mass is no propitiatory Sacrifice, for if it were, the Mass and Communion of one would be profitable to another".¹ It is difficult to see, in this exposition, what is the antecedent and what is the consequent; what is the reason and what is the conclusion. But it expresses clearly Luther's denial that the Mass is a Sacrifice at all, and his view that the Eucharist is, at most, only a Sacrament. This is the prevailing Protestant position in this country at the present time. As long as it is denied that the Holy Eucharist is a Sacrifice, there can be no question as to whether or not it is a propitiatory Sacrifice. Even those who, like Bishop Gore, admit that in some sense it is a Sacrifice, do not allow that it is propitiatory, except in the wide sense in which all our acts and duties here on earth make us "workers together with God"—the reference seems to be to 3 John, verse 8.²

Propitiation—a word which is derived from the Vulgate, where it is used to translate the Greek *ἱλασμός*³ and *ἱλαστήριον*⁴—means the appeasing of the just anger of God against sinners, and, as a consequence, the rendering Him gracious and ready to bestow His Divine favour. It is found in both the Old and New Testaments. But much more frequently do we find its equivalent, in those expressions where the word oblation or the like is followed by the phrase *pro peccatis*—for sin; that is, for the obtaining pardon for sin and making satisfaction. It is this that is most prominent

¹ *De Captiv. Babylon.*

² See *The Body of Christ*, p. 176.

³ 1 John iv. 10.

⁴ Rom. iii. 25.

in the sacrificial dispensation of the Law of Moses. It is "propitiation" also which the Prophets and the Apostles set forth as the principal purpose of the Passion of Jesus Christ.

The great fountain of all propitiation, satisfaction, and impetration is the Cross of Christ. There propitiation was full and overflowing. Whatever human act or rite had possessed the prerogative of propitiation in antecedent times, or was to possess it in times to come, derived it from the Cross. When, therefore, we attribute the power of propitiation to the Mass, there must be two conditions clearly understood; first, that we must not assert any fresh or new source of propitiatory merit, and, secondly, that we must show how the whole efficacy of the Mass proceeds from the Sacred Passion.

Catholic teaching on both these heads is quite clear. In and by the Mass, as the Council of Trent says, the "saving power (of the Cross) is *applied*".¹ The doctrine that although the work of the Cross was full and superabundant, nevertheless it has to be "applied" to individual souls by some further co-operation on man's part, implying perhaps participation in some ordinance, is one against which Protestantism protests. This attitude may be said to be characteristic of Protestantism. The Blood of Christ, we are told, has done everything; there is nothing left for man to do; nay more, it is blasphemy to attempt to do anything. It is difficult to see how any reasonable being can hold this without some qualification or evasion. If the redemption of Christ is applied to every individual by the mere fact that it was once completed on the Cross, then every one is saved, and it is of no consequence henceforward whether one keeps the Commandments or not. This is absurd—and therefore even the extreme "Evangelicals" have agreed to a compromise, and assert that a man must "accept" salvation, and in some way "adhere

¹ Sess. xxii., cap. i.

to Christ," before he can say that he is saved. But if you admit as much as this you admit the whole Catholic principle—that before the "propitiation" of Christ can profit an individual soul, some further act or process must be gone through in order to apply it. What this process is, the Catholic Church teaches; it need not be explained, in this place. But this may be said, that the process as taught by the Church, besides being grounded on Holy Scripture, is admirably suited to the conditions of man's present state of probation, whereas the short and summary proceeding of the Protestant is practically compatible with the absence of either faith, charity or sorrow for sin.

The teaching of the Church, then, is that the Mass is a means—and naturally a most powerful means—of applying to the soul the benefits of the propitiation of Christ.

As has already been stated in a former chapter, the Mass may justly be called the "same" Sacrifice as that of the Cross, and yet it is itself a true Sacrifice.¹ It may be asked why the whole efficacy of the Mass must be referred to the Cross, seeing that it is itself a Sacrifice in which, just as in the Cross, Jesus Christ is Priest and Victim. Being what it is, its fruits may surely be said to flow from itself.

There can be no doubt that the Mass, had Christ disposed the scheme of our Redemption in a different way, might have been, of itself, the Sacrifice that would have redeemed the world. We will suppose—in order to exclude certain intricate questions as to the possibility of our Lord's acquiring "merit" now that He is glorified—that He had offered, as He did offer, the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Last Supper, and had offered it with no intention of going through His Passion and Death. On that supposition, that true Sacrifice of Himself under the species would have

¹ See chap. xi., *supra*.

amply sufficed to redeem a thousand worlds. The infinite dignity of His Person would have given this Sacrifice a value far transcending all that justice required for the forgiveness of human transgression, and would have made it an adequate holocaust to the majesty of God. But it is to be observed that every thought, word and act of our Blessed Lord was similarly of infinite value and of infinite propitiatory power. Was, then, our Redemption full and complete when the Sacred Heart breathed its first prayer? Almighty God had disposed otherwise. One sigh, one drop of the Precious Blood might have redeemed the world and that superabundantly; but the Divine scheme was that Redemption should be due to a series of acts, ending with the last breath upon the Cross. The infancy, Nazareth, His obscurity, poverty, obedience and suffering, the public life, and all the steps of the Passion, were linked together, in the Divine Will, as one single Redemption, consummated upon the Cross. So that no single act of Jesus redeemed us, but the whole of His life, unified and made into one moral entity by the death on the Cross. The Eucharist of the Last Supper also took its power and glory from the Cross. When He lifted up the Bread and the Cup and consecrated them, it was as one who was not doing an isolated action, or completing Redemption that night. The Sacrifice, besides being a real Sacrifice, foretold, anticipated and represented the Cross, and all its efficacy came from Calvary.

The Mass, therefore, whatever it might have been under a different dispensation, is not only a Sacrifice but a "representative" and "relative" Sacrifice. As a fact, all its efficacy comes from the one Sacrifice of Calvary. The merits of the Passion furnish all that the Mass contains. It "shows forth" the death of the Lord to the end of time. As the Council of Trent says, "the fruits of that Sacrifice of blood are by the unbloody Sacrifice abundantly received—so far are we from

derogating from the former by the latter".¹ It is a truly Catholic impulse, therefore, that urges the faithful to call these Sacrifices "one and the same Sacrifice," because not only the Priest and the Victim are the same in both, but because the great High Priest has willed that the whole of the Divine action in the Eucharist should take the glow of the Passion, and that the Mass should distribute the fruits of the Passion to the souls of men.

We have now to understand how the propitiatory effect of the Mass works, and how it is applied to the servants of God.

At first sight, it would seem difficult to see why the Mass is not absolutely infinite in force and value. Indeed, it is impossible not to admit that there is no limit to what it might effect, in satisfying for sin and obtaining grace for men. For the acts of Jesus Christ, in the Mass as everywhere, partake of the infinite worthiness of the Person who performs them—that is, of the second Person of the Blessed Trinity. But the infinite worthiness of the Sacred Heart, and the preciousness of its acts which proceeds from that worthiness, are an infinite prerogative of Christ Himself, and before they can produce an "infinite" effect in the hearts of men, many things have to be taken into account. It is evident that there is nothing in the realm of grace which the Mass would not be more than equal to. But the very condition of human things would prevent that infinite force from having infinite efficacy. Neither by the Mass nor by the Cross has any infinite effect ever been produced in the realm of grace. There is no room in the world for such an effect. As for the effects and fruits of the Mass, therefore, considered in relation to the souls of men, we are forced to turn to the Divine oracles and to the teaching of the Catholic

¹ Sess. xxii., cap. 2.

Church. How does the Mass benefit men, and in what circumstances?

It is very important to observe the distinction, as to the way in which the ordinances of grace affect the human soul, between the Mass and the Christian Sacraments. In a Sacrament we have a ceremony, made up of words and actions, which sets up and leaves behind it on the soul some kind of habitual grace; either the *prima gratia*, that is, sanctifying grace itself, or some virtuous supernatural disposition or state super-added to the "first" grace. The Mass, mighty and powerful as it is, does not act in this way. What it does is to bring the kind of grace which we call "actual"; that is, its efficacy lies in obtaining from Almighty God, through the Blood of Christ, impulses, of a supernatural order, to the soul's powers—impulses which may be of various kinds and of various degrees of strength and duration. In the words of the Council of Trent, "it causes us to approach in contrition and repentance unto God, and so obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid".¹

And it is in this way that the Mass is, as Catholic faith defines it to be, a true sacrifice of Propitiation for sin. That is, it does not itself loose the bonds of mortal sin; but it propitiates Almighty God, averts His just anger and so obtains for the sinner those abundant graces which will lead him to repentance and to the Sacrament of Penance. We have these words in the Catechism of the Council: (The Mass is) "a truly propitiatory Sacrifice, for by it God is appeased and rendered propitious to us".²

In no other way does the Holy Sacrifice blot out venial sin. It is not a Sacrament and does not alter the state of the soul by any immediate effect; but it moves the soul to acts in which supernatural love and sorrow consume those stains of sensuality, passion

¹ Sess. 22, cap. 2.

² Part 2, cap. 4, par. 63.

and self-love which in our sloth and indifference we incur at every hour of the day, and which are called venial sins, because their guilt is not sufficiently deliberate or serious to deprive us of union with God.

It will thus be easily understood that the propitiatory effect of the Sacrifice of the Mass, whilst in one sense it can never fail, in another may be frustrated. The Mass cannot fail to appease the anger of God, and to render Him propitious to the sinner, because it is Jesus Christ who offers the Sacrifice, and such propitiation is the very purpose of the Sacrifice. But here we are met by a mystery. How far any particular Mass obtains for any particular hearer the graces of love and contrition cannot be known, because neither directly nor indirectly has it ever been revealed. For one thing, there must be some salutary disposition on the part of the hearer, or of the person to whom the special fruit is applied. Grace, properly so called, if it really affects beneficially the soul of an adult, is never unaccompanied by a responsive movement of the heart. The Mass does not, any more than other ordinances, provide grace in a mechanical fashion, but depends upon a certain preparation or accompanying disposition of the human heart and mind. Such preparation or disposition is, itself, an effect of God's impulse; but compared with further grace it is a natural preparation of the subject. Something of the kind is certainly required before we can benefit by the Mass. It need not be very deep or vehement; such depth and vehemence is the very purpose of the Mass itself. But it must be at least that slight "conversion" or turning of the will—half-realised, perhaps, clouded, and tepid, but still an undeniable "turning,"—which God, in His infinite mercy to His creature, is always ready to meet far more than half-way and to strengthen, to fan into intensity, by His visitation and especially by means of the great ordinance of the Holy Eucharist. In the great majority of those who hear Mass, this disposition, we may well

hope, is realised. The more willingly and lovingly one hears Mass, and the greater the self-denial one exercises in order to be present, the more abundantly the fruits of the propitiation and impetration of Jesus Christ are given to the soul. But this is to be understood not in terms of equivalence but of proportion. No disposition of man can be an equivalent for the graces of the Mass. Even were the hearer a Saint, and his soul prepared by every kind of supernatural state and act, yet the outpourings of the Mass are beyond everything he can bring. All who approach this "open fountain"¹ of the Blood of Calvary take away gifts which we have no language to describe or reckon. But together with the indefinite and inexhaustible possibilities which such a Sacrifice must justly and naturally be held to claim, the uncertain and varying states and moods of the creature must ever leave us, whether saints or sinners, in darkness as to what happens in particular cases, and this uncertainty, not to speak of any other reason, must continue to urge all the servants of God never to lose an opportunity of assisting at the Holy Sacrifice. And whatever we may personally obtain, it must never be forgotten that every Mass gives supreme glory to God and offers Him the adoring thanks of the Sacred Heart and of the Church; that it propitiates His Divine Majesty towards all the children of the Church; and that the graces and bounties which it is intended to be the means of giving to the world, even if they fail in certain cases, for reasons which we humbly adore, to reach individual souls, nevertheless in some way benefit the race for which Christ died, and pass into the treasure of the Church; whilst it is indeed rare that any one whatever who assists at Mass, or for whom the Mass is offered, does not experience the power of the Mass unto salvation.

The punishment due to sin that is forgiven is in a

¹ Zacharias xiii. 1.

special way affected by the holy Sacrifice of the Mass. For both the living and the dead it is the instrument of pardon. As the Sacrifice of the Cross discharged in full all the debt of sin, so the Mass, by which the merits of the Cross are applied, enables those who offer it, those who hear it, and those for whom it is offered, to pay what they owe to justice in satisfaction for their sins. And it is not only a treasure which men can thus apply to their own needs, but it is also the most efficacious of prayers for pardon and for the spirit of penance. These happy effects of the Mass are felt by the souls in purgatory as well as by those still on earth. The holy souls in purgatory cannot use the Mass themselves; but their friends on earth can hear and offer it in their behalf. How, under what conditions, and in what measure this fruit of the Mass is applied to the suffering souls, we do not know. One Mass is powerful enough to empty purgatory. Yet the Catholic practice is to say Mass after Mass for the departed. The Church has no jurisdiction in purgatory. And, moreover, even on earth the Mass is not wholly at her disposal. She celebrates it, by her priests, as she wishes; but its operation is not defined, as that of the Sacraments is. The immense multitude of Christian souls, with their diverse and innumerable miseries and wants, for ever gather round the altar, that a drop of the Precious Blood may fall upon them and heal them. To what are we to attribute that limitation of the effects of the all-powerful Mass which certainly is the law of Almighty God? When speaking above about the remission of sins, we said that it depended, as a condition, on human disposition. This is easy to understand, but it is not so easy to conceive what it is that limits the efficacy of the Mass when there is question of the punishment due to sin forgiven. The principle still seems to be, that our Heavenly Father makes man's own exertion a condition of His interference. Perhaps it could never be otherwise as long as the creature is in a state of proba-

tion; to extinguish all liability automatically would go far towards putting an end to probation. This would not hold in the case of the suffering souls, whose day of probation is over. But the holy souls are to depend upon their friends on earth. This is the law. They can no longer gain merit for themselves, or make use of the great Sacrifice which applies the graces purchased by the Precious Blood. The day of their probation is over—and they must now wait till their debt is paid by suffering, even to the last farthing. But they still belong, even in purgatory, to the great Brotherhood of which Christ is the Eldest Brother and the Head. They are no longer on earth, and therefore the power of the Keys does not reach them. They are not yet in Heaven, and therefore they are still needy and poor. But the earth can still help them, just as the heavens can; the earth with her inexhaustible treasure of propitiation and impetration, the heavens with the indulgence which Mary most of all, and all the Saints with her, carry straight from the mouth of God the Son made man. As for the help of the earth, it would seem to be Christ's will that His own all-powerful Sacrifice, the Mass, should really be applied to His realm of purgatory by the goodwill of His servants here below. Man must move, must celebrate, must make some self-denying exertion, must purify and lift up his own heart, before the Mass can refresh the suffering souls. The devotion of men is a condition of the acceptance of the Mass for the holy souls. Let priests and people give heed to this.

To sum up. The Sacrifice of the Mass invariably and infallibly produces its effect in so far as it renders its most august homage to God, and offers Him a worthy thanksgiving for His beneficence. In these respects, moreover, its value or efficacy may be said to be infinite. For it represents the Sacrifice of the Cross; and although Christ, in offering the Mass, cannot now be said to merit afresh, yet the Mass is undoubtedly, and

is by Him intended to be, an applicatory repetition of the homage of the Cross. Thus the world is endowed with the inestimable prerogative of the perpetual "clean oblation," and "in every place there is Sacrifice"¹—the one and complete Sacrifice made by the Divine Person who is also the Head of the Church.

It may also be truly affirmed that the value and efficacy of the Mass are infinite in respect of propitiation and impetration, and that these infallibly occur whenever a Mass is said. It is true, as we have said, that the word here should be rather "indefinite" or "inexhaustible" than infinite; because there cannot be in creation any term or medium capable of intercepting or receiving the infinite. As the Mass is Christ's offering, it seems clear that it is capable of laying at the feet of the Almighty Creator the whole propitiation of the Passion, and of pleading to Him with the whole of the power of the Passion. The effects of that propitiation and pleading must always reach the earth in grateful and abundant showers. But we cannot say that any definite measure of them will be given to any particular soul. Yet, speaking generally, we may certainly say that the Mass, quite independently of the personal holiness or imperfection of the priest, by its own power, and infallibly, draws Almighty God to grant those graces which lead men to repentance and to love, and so to forgiveness of sin. The same thing, still speaking generally, may be said of the remission of the temporal punishment due to forgiven sin—and this both on earth and in purgatory; that is, this remission, which the Mass causes by its direct operation, infallibly occurs, though we cannot be infallibly sure that this or the other soul experiences it. The effect of the Holy Sacrifice in obtaining temporal blessings—peace, prosperity, health, etc., is also, in a sense, infallible; but it is infallible something in the same way that all prayer for such

¹ Malachias i. 11.

temporal blessings is infallible; that is, there must be certain conditions.

The Council of Trent says that the Mass is that "clean oblation, which cannot be spoiled by any unworthiness or sinfulness of the offerer".¹ Such effects as those just described depend upon the great High Priest, Jesus Christ. Whoever the actual priest may be who celebrates in His name, the Mass never fails in the chief purposes of its institution. But it must not be forgotten that the Mass is also a prayer and a work of the celebrating priest. Its holy forms are such as would express and stimulate piety, were there no Sacrifice in the true sense. In this respect, the better the priest, the better the Mass.

As for the faithful, although, as we have seen, the effects of the Mass are produced in the soul independently of its own efforts or dispositions—or at all events to an extent quite out of proportion to such dispositions—nevertheless, the greater their attention and devotion, the more fully does the stream flow that carries with it propitiation, thanksgiving, satisfaction and the worthy worship of the Almighty Creator.

The condition on which these blessed and saving influences are experienced by the servants of God is that they are "present" at the Sacrifice. On this point, however, a word of explanation is necessary.

Every Mass is, in the first place, offered for the whole Church of God. As we have seen, the whole Church benefits by every Mass. By every Mass the whole Church offers its homage, and the whole Church secures increased benignity and acceptance from Almighty God; so that the Church, as a Church, is, in virtue of every Mass, built up, extended and protected; its Pontiff, Bishops and Priests, strengthened in their office; its victory over the world made more complete, and its unity and holiness more signal and

¹ Sess. xxii., cap. i.

conspicuous. How far every individual member of the Church shares in the fruit of every Mass is, as we have seen, obscure and uncertain. But two things seem certain; first, that the efficacy of every Mass is so ample, not to say boundless, that there is no reason on that side why every unit of all the human millions should not benefit by it to the whole extent of his needs, and, secondly, that the actual participation of each unit in every Mass in some way or other depends on individual dispositions. But we might go further, probably, when speaking of "graces" which are external, such as protection from spiritual foes, good opportunities, the removal of temptation, and perhaps the remission of temporal punishment, and say that in these respects every individual man and woman of the Church's children benefits by every Mass.

This general fruit and effect being presupposed, we next observe that, as might be expected, those who assist at a Mass are in a position to obtain more from it than those absent. All the liturgies express in the clearest terms the advantage of being present at the Sacrifice, and the celebrating minister prays for them over and over again. The Mass was instituted in order to be the Church's great public rite of worship; to draw men round the Altar, and to unite them in what Jesus Christ, the Church's Head, wills to be the exercise of His eternal Priesthood. If ever a servant of God worships fruitfully, or gives thanks worthily, or is likely to obtain grace and pardon, it is at that propitious moment. If ever Calvary is renewed, and the privilege of standing beneath the Cross returns to men, it is then—when, as the Church says, the "work of our Salvation is done every time," that is, the abundant fruits of the Cross are poured upon men.¹

¹ "Quoties hujus Hostiæ commemoratio celebratur, toties nostræ salutis opus exercetur, nimirum uberrimi illius cruentæ Hostiæ fructus per hoc incruentum Sacrificium ad nos manant" (*Catech. Rom.*, p. 11, par. 78).

The faithful, moreover, may participate in the fruits of the Mass, in addition to their general share in every Mass, by causing Mass to be celebrated, or by having Mass offered for their particular benefit or intention. The faithful co-operate in Mass by offering their means for the providing of what is necessary for its celebration, and by contributing to the support of priests. The oblations which, from the earliest times, the faithful were accustomed to bring to the celebration of the Eucharist were always understood to give them a distinct share in the Sacrifice itself, as we gather from the Fathers. Tertullian goes so far as to imply that this oblation conferred on the laity a kind of priesthood.¹ Oblation in the form of bread and wine has been practically obsolete for many centuries. But all those who give to the altar, or to the sustenance of a priest, may confidently hope that, in proportion to their spirit of generous sacrifice, they obtain from the Mass blessings which otherwise they would not have received.

The offering of the Mass for the benefit of a particular person or persons, which is sometimes a duty arising from the priest's office or his stipend, is a Catholic practice grounded on reason and approved by the Church. It can hardly be disputed, even had not the Church decided the question, that the offerer of a Sacrifice like the Mass would naturally have the power to apply its fruits, or some of them, to other persons than himself. True, he never can alienate those fruits in such a way as to leave nothing for himself. The priest is ordained by Christ to carry out a Sacrifice which is unlimited in its possible, if not in its actual, efficacy. He is not a mere mechanical instrument of what is done, but a human being, with a responsible intelligence and will. What he does, is done by the exercise of that reason and will. Therefore his mediatory office—the office of one who stands between God and man—whilst

¹ *Lib. de Exhortatione castitatis*, cap. 7.

it can only produce its effects by handling the merits of the Cross, nevertheless must deal with those merits as an intelligent human being would deal with a stewardship committed to him. The exercise of that most sacred office will bring to himself benedictions which are of their own nature united to such an office. He stands and sacrifices in the place of Christ, but he is also a frail and needy mortal man, working out his own salvation. Among all the redeemed of Christ, those who are His priests will surely receive the choicest graces of His precious Blood. As was prophesied by Jeremias when he saw the nations going up to Sion to celebrate the new Covenant—the nations flocking together “to the good things of the Lord, the corn and wine and oil”—the Lord, in proclaiming that glorious dispensation uses these gracious words, “I will fill the souls of the priests with fatness”.¹ In every Mass the priest who offers the heavenly Victim receives (if he be fitly disposed) a goodly portion of those graces that lead to contrition and love, and of that forgiveness which it is the purpose of the holy Mass to distribute. These he cannot alienate or will to another (except perhaps as regards satisfaction). It is the minister's own personal acquisition.

But it is certain that, out of its abundance, the fruit of the holy Sacrifice can, to a certain extent, be made over by the celebrant to another person. This is a Catholic tenet which, as need not be said, is not explicitly contained in Scripture. It is a matter in which the Church has made Eucharistic doctrine more plain and clear—as in many other points that Sacrament and Sacrifice have been illuminated by the living Catholic Church in the past, and as they will be still in the future. False teachers, such as the Wycliffites, the Protestants and the Jansenists, have been strongly hostile to a doctrine which brings out so clearly the

¹ Jeremias xxxi. 14.

supernatural ministerial character of the Christian priesthood. The notorious Synod of Pistoia, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, dared to brand as insulting to God the teaching that a priest could apply the fruit of the Sacrifice to whom he pleased. Pope Pius VI., in condemning this pronouncement, lays it down that the special application of the Sacrifice made by the priest is more profitable to those in whose favour such application is made than to other persons, and that a special fruit accrues from the special application which the Church commands or recommends to be made in favour of determinate persons or classes of persons—as for example when Bishops and parish priests are commanded to celebrate for their flocks.¹

It is not astonishing that the faithful should be anxious to obtain from priests the privilege of thus having the Mass applied for their needs and intentions, and for their departed friends in purgatory. The custom of accompanying a request of this kind with the offering of a small sum of money is a survival of the very ancient usage of bringing bread and wine for the Sacrifice. The bread and wine thus offered in the early days of the Church, let it be remarked, were by no means intended for the mere Consecration and Communion. There was always offered enough of both to leave a large surplus, which was used as a common source of maintenance for the clergy. In process of time it became increasingly more convenient to offer money. Perhaps this change is first seen in the eighth century, and it seems to have been common in the eleventh. St. Thomas of Aquin in the thirteenth, thus explains and justifies the practice of offering these stipends for Masses: "The priest," he says, "receives the money, not as the price of the Eucharistic consecration—for that would be simony—but as the provision of his own maintenance".² All the

¹ See Denzinger, *Enchiridion* (ed. 1874), p. 284.

² 2, 2, qu. 100, art. 2, ad 2.

Church's theologians have taught, and do teach, the same. It is the traditional Catholic feeling that these pecuniary offerings, in proportion as they are more sensibly felt by the donor, have, in the occult providence of God, a powerful influence on securing with certainty an application which is surrounded by mystery.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE CULTUS OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

THE fact that the Real Presence of our Blessed Lord in the Holy Eucharist is a permanent Presence, not depending on any act or disposition of the worshipper or recipient, but remaining as long as the species remain which have been consecrated by the minister, has necessarily given rise to a marked external observance or worship. Naturally, it is impossible that we should have in our churches, perpetually present, the Body and Blood, the Soul and Divinity of Christ—the very Christ under sacramental veils—without making them a prominent object—perhaps I might say, the chief object—of our religious occupation, whether interior or exterior. In fact, the splendour of Eucharistic ritual, the various ceremonial forms in which we honour the Blessed Sacrament all through the year, and the constant devotion of the faithful in their visits and their assistance, are well-known characteristics of Catholicism, especially in countries where Catholicism prevails. I will endeavour to give an historical explanation of the various forms of the *cultus* of the Blessed Sacrament, which we find now existing in the Church.

In an inquiry of this kind, what probably first strikes us, is the apparent absence of Eucharistic *cultus* in the early ages of Christianity. This is frequently brought forward by non-Catholics as proving that the

way in which Catholics now regard the Holy Eucharist was quite unknown in primitive times, and that, in fact, there could not have been any belief in the Real Presence, or else there would have been evident signs of adoration and of public and private worship.

On this subject, we must say, first of all, that the proofs of belief in the Real Presence are so strong that any absence of *cultus*, as alleged, however well founded such allegation might be, would perhaps be a difficulty but could not possibly raise a doubt. Next, we have to point out that it is absolutely clear that from the very beginning, the Holy Eucharist was held to be adorable with divine worship, or with *latría*. For example, Origen (third century) in more than one passage uses words which are equivalent to "adoration" when exhorting the faithful to honour and frequent it. In a passage of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, cited in a former chapter, the communicant is directed to bow his head and venerate the Precious Blood. And St. Ambrose says: "We adore still the flesh of our Redemption, and we adore it in the mysteries which He has instituted and which are celebrated every day upon our altars".¹ St. Augustine's testimony is unmistakable. "No one," he says, "eats the flesh of Jesus Christ without having first adored it, and far from sinning in thus adoring it, it would be a sin not to adore".² St. Chrysostom has the phrase "Adore and communicate". He speaks of the Powers of Heaven who are present in the Sanctuary and adore; and it is related in his life that he more than once had a vision of those angelic adorers. Moreover, the Fathers who, in the third and fourth centuries, contended so strongly and gloriously for the divinity of Christ, and for His true human nature, constantly appeal to the Holy Eucharist, protesting that if He was not God and man there would be no

¹ *De Spiritu Sancto*, lib. iii., cap. 12.

² *In Ps. cxviii.*

such thing as the Catholic Church held the Eucharist to be.

If any one finds it strange that, in spite of this belief, there should be so little of what is called Eucharistic *cultus* or worship in the first five centuries, and that for many centuries after that such worship was apparently very much kept in the background, he must remember that there are many sides to the Holy Eucharist, just as there are many sides to the Incarnation. The several aspects of the Incarnation, to the limited and slowly clearing vision of the human heart, more or less interfere with each other. Jesus Christ is God; but if His Divinity had from the beginning been brought out in the Church's consciousness as it is in these days, there would have been the risk of the very dispensation of Redemption being misunderstood. The life and Passion, as they were to be, would not have been possible, if men and women from the beginning had felt themselves obliged to deal with Him or treat Him only on their knees. The world, in the early days, had to apprehend the Redemption, the mediatorial office, the Priesthood, and the human example of Jesus Christ. Not everything can be learnt at once. It may be impossible to put in words the exact state of the mind of the earliest disciples. As in the Old Law, the "kings and the wise men" knew the most, the rest saw less. But, on the whole, the Divinity grew more clear and definite, and the conception of it more adequate, as time went on, as confessors uttered their testimony and doctors analysed their faith. Thus it has been with the Blessed Sacrament. At first, Christians had to learn that it was a common Banquet wherein Christ united Himself to the souls of His servants. They had to come to see that it was the "clean oblation" of the New Testament. Had it been presented to them, at first, with the incense and lights of later days, with the genuflexions and elevations which came in their good time, it would appear that

the Church could not have taken in to the full the great truths connected with the sacramental and sacrificial aspects of the august dispensation. We learn from the history of dogma that this orderly advance from light to light is the law of Divine Providence. It is not that the Real Presence was ever doubted, or even that Christians did not explicitly confess it. But an idea is only taken into the mind in proportion as its relations to other ideas are apprehended. In the early times there were innumerable relations with which the idea of the Real Presence had never been brought into touch. So there are still, let us be sure, even in our own day, luminous points of contact that human reason, aided by the Holy Spirit and guided by the Church, will triumphantly establish between the Blessed Sacrament and many a star of thought which the slowly moving spheres of time shall bring above the horizon.

The human side of Christ had to be realised before the Divine. I say realised—because both sides were known from the beginning, and truths relating to either would, if challenged, have been clearly asserted in the Church. The *cultus* of the Blessed Sacrament could not outstrip the *cultus* of the Incarnate God. Neither, it may be added, could one generation display its devotion, its piety and its worship, quite in the same way as another and a later. As far as devotion is not pure principle, it will differ as men differ in feeling, sentiment, affection, and temperament, as they have inherited sympathies or antipathies and as they have attained new ideas. When the “history” of the Blessed Sacrament comes to be fully written out, it will be seen how through successive epochs its glories have risen higher and higher over the world of Faith. For the first hundred years of Christianity the Body of the Lord was, before all things, the bond of Christian unity and the great symbol of the one and only Church. From thence till the end of the persecutions

it was, in addition, the recognised source of strength and courage in persecution and difficulty, whereby the martyrs triumphed, the confessors stood firm in the faith, the virgins rose above the world, and the whole Church withstood the attacks of the devil. From about A.D. 500 to 1000, the Roman See perfected and imposed her Eucharistic Liturgy on the West. Nothing was lost or dropped of sacramental truth or spiritual significance, as the Church had inherited them from the Upper Chamber and the Catacombs; but now the Eucharistic Liturgy, which had already taken shape in great centres like Antioch and Alexandria, began to spread over Europe, establishing itself in the cathedrals and parish churches which by degrees covered the land, august in its uniformity, attracting the populations round its altars, dominating civil and even political life, and equally effective and impressive whether it was celebrated by a single minister or with all the aids and resources of Church and State. With the Carlovingian renaissance came a stirring up of Eucharistic question and answer, amidst which the Church spoke with her firm and irrepressible voice. Between Charlemagne and the Council of Vienne (1311), after the re-statement of the doctrine of the Real Presence in the terms of Transubstantiation, the outward pomp and glory of the Blessed Sacrament became marked by the solemn elevation in the Mass, by processions, by the public carrying of the Host to the dying, and by the institution of the feast and office of Corpus Christi. Three centuries later, after the touching, emphatic and splendid utterances of the Council of Trent, we find the Blessed Sacrament exposed upon the altars of the Church, in Rome and all through Christendom, from year's end to year's end, virtually without intermission. Between 1600 and 1900 was established the modern doctrine of frequent and daily Communion; that is to say, the doctrine that although the Holy Eucharist is the true

Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ, ever glorious, adorable and terrible, yet it is His will that men should approach to the Communion of that sacred Presence, not only often but even daily, to increase in grace and Divine love and be healed of their passions and sins. It has chiefly been by the devotion to the Sacred Heart that this Catholic view, never lost sight of by the Church, but oftentimes obscured, has been made as clear as the day. The love and honour of the Sacred Heart means, above everything else, the tender remembrance of the mercies of Jesus Christ—of which the chief is the Holy Sacrament of the altar.

The present epoch is the epoch of frequent and fervent Communion. What will be the special character of the days on which we are now about to enter? Would it be rash to say that they will be illuminated with new light about the Mass? The Mass in which, as the Catechism of Trent says, the “work of our redemption is enacted,” is, and has always been, the central rite of the Church’s worship, and her chief treasure. But perhaps we need Saints and Pontiffs, human discussion and the light of the Holy Ghost, to enable us to lift a little more fully the veil that covers the act of sacrifice and to penetrate the obscurity in which its operation and its effect are still wrapped round.

It will be useful here to give the precise words of the Council of Trent on the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. “If any one saith that in the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is not to be adored with the worship, and with the outward worship also, of *latria*; and is, consequently, neither to be venerated with a special festive solemnity, nor to be solemnly borne in procession, according to the laudable and universal rite and custom of holy Church; or not to be set up publicly before the people to be adored, and that the adorers thereof are idolaters; let him be anathema.”¹

¹ Sess. xiii., can. vi.

On this dogmatic passage, which was directed against the heresies of the sixteenth century, and which is equally well suited to oppose the non-Catholic assertions of the present day, we may first inquire *what* we adore when we adore the Blessed Sacrament.

We have seen, in a former chapter, that we do not adore, precisely, the Sacrament, as a Sacrament; because the Sacrament lies in the sign or sensible thing; now the sign or sensible thing is the species, as consecrated; the Body of our Lord not being the object of sensible perception. What we adore is the whole Christ there present, just as St. Thomas adored Him when he fell at His feet and exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" But, it may be asked, why should we show our worship by external signs when there is nothing external or sensible to worship? Does it not look as if we worshipped the species merely? Might we not just as well worship the house in which our Lord lived on earth? We answer that we adore neither the house nor the species; but there is a wide difference between the house that shelters our Lord and the species that conceal Him. The house is a substantial and separate thing, which can never be an intimate belonging of our Lord; it would only cover or locate Him; whereas the species are not substance, but modes, and modes specially adopted or used by our Lord, to take, in our regard, the place of the modes of His own Body. The connection between the species and His Body being thus practically as intimate as that between our Lord's own colour or shape and Himself, there can be no danger or unseemliness in bowing down before them any more than in bowing down before our Lord's own shape or colour; for as no one would ever accuse a man, when he bent the knee to Jesus, of worshipping His shape or His colour, so no one in his senses can suppose that when we adore the Blessed Sacrament we adore the species. Our non-Catholic friends can never get rid of the idea that the Bread and the Wine are there

still. If they would enter into our views, they would confess that the idea of idolatry was ridiculous. We adore the Host because it *is* our Lord ; and as it is He, and as the species He has chosen to adopt are in that place and not in other places, we rightly say, though not in the most strict sense, that He is there, in the tabernacle, in the ciborium, in the ostensorium, in the priest's hands, where the Host or the Chalice is.

Anything like an adequate history of the *cultus* of the Holy Eucharist cannot be undertaken here. But it will be useful to present the reader with a summary sketch of its development. For it has naturally developed as the doctrine has become more explicit.

We have said enough already to show that the Body and Blood of the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament were "adored" from the earliest times. Such adoration might be expressed by bowing the head, by bending the knee, or by standing in the usual posture of prayer. The sacred Liturgy was celebrated standing. There is evidence that, on other days than Sundays, kneeling was practised ; but there is no sign that it was specially before the Eucharist that the faithful knelt ; it was rather during penitential supplication, when the clergy and people were invited by the Deacon to bend the knee, with the words *Flectamus genua*.¹ It is not easy to state precisely at what epoch the elevation of the Host was introduced into the Mass. In the old liturgies, as we have seen, an elevation takes place at the end of the Canon—when the Priest, elevating a little both Host and Cup together, ends a prayer of doxology with the words *omnis honor et gloria*. This elevation, however, was not intended to challenge the adoration of the assistants. It was rather in honour of God. The usage of elevating the Host immediately after the Consecration is generally referred by the various writers who have searched through the monuments—such as Thiers,

¹ This invitation is found in the *Apostolic Constitutions*.

Mabillon, Du Chardon, Le Brun, etc.—to the twelfth century; and it seems to have been first adopted in France, and as a popular reply to the heretic Berengarius, who denied the Real Presence. It was sanctioned by the Holy See at the beginning of the thirteenth century by Pope Honorius III. As far as we can gather, it seems to have been, at first, only one out of a variety of ways invented by the piety of particular priests or churches to show their detestation of heresy. But this particular rite was so well-adapted to excite and respond to popular devotion that it spread everywhere, and by A.D. 1250 was certainly universal. The great outburst of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament which began with the repression of Berengarius (eleventh century) and culminated in the establishment of the festival of Corpus Christi (1264) was marked by an intense desire to look upon, to see with the bodily eye, the Body of our Lord. This had its origin, we cannot doubt, in the revulsion of feeling against the doctrine that was common to Berengarius, to the Waldenses, and the Wycliffites, that what you saw in the Holy Eucharist was not our Lord. This, as they held it, was a denial of the Real Presence. The Catholic faith, therefore, urged the flock, under the guidance of the Bishops and Councils, to make a special devotion of “looking upon” our Lord. Like most popular devotions there was in it a danger of superstition. To have seen our Lord’s Body was considered not only a safeguard and a benediction, but even sometimes a kind of charm. But this very excess—which was carefully corrected by ecclesiastical authority—shows how deep and widely-spread the devotion was. In the mediæval Lay Folk’s Mass Book, the people are directed, at the elevation, to fix their eyes upon the Sacred Host, raising their hands in adoring welcome, and then to bend down reverently before their Redeemer. This was the ancient practice at the elevation—to gaze, to welcome, and then to bow down; as we find it in some

monastic ceremonials still, and in Ireland. The practice of ringing the church bell at the elevation dates, in England, from a Provincial Constitution of 1281. When its sound was heard, people in the neighbourhood entered the church to adore, boys at Eton or St. Paul's stopped their lessons to pray, labourers in the fields bent their heads in memory and reverence. Within the church a special bell was rung, called the "sacring bell," and torches were lighted. All the liturgical books of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, and even the codes of Canon Law, insist upon this external reverence at the elevation. To quote from the *Lay Folk's Mass Book*.¹

When time is of ye sacring,
A little bell men use to ring,
Then shalt thou do reverence
To Jesus Christ's own Presence
That may loose all baleful bands;
Kneeling, hold up both thy hands,
And so the elevation thou behold
For this is He Whom Judas sold.

The text goes on to say that this is He, also, who was scourged and crucified, who rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven, and who shall come to judge—"the same is He thou lookst upon". We have here that explicit form of belief in the corporal Presence which marks the Catholic rejection of the heresy of Berengarius, of the Cathari, the Wycliffites, and other false teachers of the Middle Ages. The verses, taken from a manual of devotion which existed in more than one English dialect in the North and the Midlands during the three hundred years which preceded the Reformation, are a fair specimen of the faith and the popular devotion of our forefathers.

The custom of kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament, whether at the elevation or reserved in the Tabernacle, took a long time to become thoroughly

¹ Edition by Canon Simmons, p. 37.

established in the Western Church. The Greeks, as Gardellini (*c.* 1750) observes, rarely genuflect before It, their custom being rather to bow the head. In Europe, even at Mass, kneeling seems not to be earlier than the time of St. Raymund de Pennafort († 1275). In the "thirteenth Roman Ordinal," published by the order of Pope Gregory X., about the very time of St. Raymund's death, we have the following direction: "At the elevation of the Body of Christ let them prostrate to the earth and falling on their faces reverently adore, and so remain prostrate till the *Per omnia sæcula sæculorum*"—that is, till the *Pater noster*. The earlier Ordinals do not mention this prostration, or even genuflexion, although they speak of the bowing of the head. St. Raymund de Pennafort is probably the earliest writer who says that at the elevation one may bend the knee.

In 1227, during the last days of Pope Honorius, an important Council held at Treves—one of the many that followed the great Council of the Lateran—orders that the Body of Christ be carried to the sick with the utmost reverence, with bell and candle, and that the clergy instruct the laity to kneel when It passes, striking the breast, and joining the hands together.¹ The constitutions of Cluny, which date from about this time, prescribe genuflexion at the sound of the bell of the elevation. In the first half of this century diocesan statutes of Durham, of Oxford and of Lincoln are extant which order genuflexion at the elevation, and in the diocese of Exeter in 1287 the faithful are told not "to bend irreverently, but to kneel and adore their Creator with all devotion and reverence".² The rubrics of the Roman Missal which go back to the end of the fifteenth century, formally prescribe genuflexion at the elevation. But there can be no doubt

¹ Hefele, *Histoire des Conciles*, tom. viii., p. 197.

² Bridgett, *The Holy Eucharist in Great Britain*, vol. ii., p. 63.

that it was the usual practice in the Western Church at the beginning of the fourteenth century. It may be remarked that the rubrics of the Roman Missal lay it down that, at a Low Mass, the faithful who assist should kneel all through, except whilst the Gospel is being read; and this even in Paschal time.

The practice of paying reverence to the tabernacle, or other repository where the Holy Eucharist was reserved, would naturally spread concomitantly with that of genuflexion at Mass. The manner of reserving the Holy Eucharist, and the kind of vessel or place in which it was kept, have altered from age to age. The word *Pastophorion* which occurs in the description of a Christian church given in the "Apostolic Constitutions"¹ certainly does not mean a place exclusively devoted to the reservation of the Holy Eucharist. But it is certain that it was reserved (and not merely sent out from the altar) for the sick at this very date; the well-known description of the death-bed communion of St. Ambrose († 420) is a proof of this. We find St. John Chrysostom, in describing a tumult at Constantinople, in 403, stating that the soldiers entered the place "where the holy things were stored up, and the most holy Blood of Christ was spilt on their garments".² From the sixth century downwards we find the vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament was kept, called *turris*, *capsa*, *pyxis*, *columba*, *cuppa*, and *ciborium*. These vessels, with their precious contents, were sometimes kept in a small chamber of the church to which the name of *secretarium* was given.³ But this way of reserving was comparatively rare. In the South of France, in Germany and in Italy, the Eucharistic reserve was generally kept in an ambry or small cupboard, such as is now used for the Holy Oils. This ambry was constructed either in a pillar,

¹ Book 2, ch. 57.

² *Epist. ad Innoc.*, 3.

³ The word *secretarium*, however, has many meanings.

or in a wall of the sanctuary near the altar; sometimes it was under some altar other than the high altar. Sometimes, again, the aumbry was a movable wooden "tabernacle". This tabernacle finally came to be lifted on to the high altar itself. In the West and North of France, in Belgium and in England, the Eucharistic vessel, generally in the form of a dove, was suspended from the vault of the sanctuary. These various fashions of reservation were found side by side in the same diocese and sometimes in the same church. Archæologists consider that it was towards the end of the fifteenth century that it became a common usage in Europe to have the "tabernacle" containing the Blessed Sacrament on the middle of the step forming the retro-altar. But it was only by degrees that these "tabernacles" lost their more primitive form of a wooden or metal box covered with silk, and took the shape that now prevails. The process seems to have been this: it was found desirable to have the "pyx" on the altar; it was therefore often taken out of the *armarium* or detached tabernacle, and kept on the altar during Mass, or at other times. Then it was seen that it would be more reverential and convenient to have the tabernacle on the altar itself. This became common in the seventeenth century. In England, if Cardinal Pole's injunctions (A.D. 1555) had had a happier result, there would have been "a tabernacle raised and fixed" on the high altar of every church.

There is no record showing that any reverence was paid to the *secretarium* or the *armarium* where the Blessed Sacrament was reserved before the eleventh century. In the Constitutions of Lanfranc († 1086) we find a direction that, in the procession of Palm Sunday, genuflexions shall be made in passing the *capsa* which contains the Body of our Lord. This form of devotion spread in that and the following century, and, like the elevation, it was part of the practi-

cal reply of the Catholic people to the heresies of those times. It is, however, a curious fact that, up to the very end of the sixteenth century, and much later in some places, there was a widespread resistance, especially in France, to genuflexion before the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle, and even, as we have seen, at the elevation. But the Holy See, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, made a pronouncement which decided the question. This was a decision of the Congregation of Rites in 1602. A certain Canon of a Collegiate Church in the ancient city of Beja in Portugal (Pax-Julia) complained to Rome that, in the processions through the church on Sundays and festivals after Tierce, the Canons, "following a very old custom or rather abuse," did not genuflect but only bowed the head when they passed before the Altar of the Blessed Sacrament; and that when the Petitioner, out of reverence for so great a Sacrament, bent his knee to the ground, the other Canons took it very badly, and wished to inflict a fine upon him, as infringing the ancient customs of the church. To this the Sacred Congregation, which had been founded by Pope Sixtus V. only fifteen years before, replied, on 14th December, 1602, that it was not only unlawful for the Canons who did not genuflect to fine those who did genuflect, but rather that those who genuflected should fine those who did not, seeing that all the faithful were bound to genuflect when they passed before the Most Holy Sacrament. And in future all the Canons of the Church of Beja were to take this as a rule, notwithstanding any alleged custom to the contrary, which the Sacred Congregation declared to be rather a corruption and an abuse. In spite of this decree, in some of the greatest churches of France, such as Rheims and Lyons, bowing, instead of genuflecting, at the elevation, continued to the end of the eighteenth century, if not longer. There are traces of this conservative spirit even in this country, where the customs of the French refugee

clergy and religious who fled before the great Revolution have had no little influence. In certain convents it was the practice within living memory merely to bow on entering the choir, notwithstanding the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle. Perhaps the objection to kneeling in church, even at Mass, which men seem to have in France and in Spain, may be a survival of the old and traditional feeling that the attitude of liturgical prayer was to stand.

The institution of the Feast of Corpus Christi (1264) marks an epoch in the *cultus* of the Blessed Sacrament. From it we may date that joyous and triumphant homage to that Divine Mystery, quite apart from Mass and Communion, which is so striking a feature of modern Catholicism. It is not that this festival was primarily connected either with processions or with exposition. But it placed the feast day of the Eucharist among the great solemnities of the Church, and encouraged the faithful to celebrate it with all the jubilation of Christmas or of Easter. Pope Urban IV., in the Bull of Institution, calls on the faithful to come in crowds to the churches, and there to testify their gladness by hymns and canticles. "Let faith," he said, "dilate in thanksgiving, let hope leap with joy, let charity be moved to the depths with gladness." Pope Urban had been Archdeacon of Liège before he was elected to the Papacy. He was well acquainted with the revelations made to St. Juliana. It was to him that was brought, at Orvieto, the corporal which had been miraculously stained with blood at the Mass of the troubled priest in the church of St. Christina at Rome. Signs and portents like these vouchsafed to a pious and simple flock seem to have prepared the way for Corpus Christi. We read in the life of St. Hugh of Lincoln († 1200) that he had frequent visions of our Lord as an infant in the Blessed Sacrament, and that he refused to go to look at the blood which was alleged to have flowed miraculously from a Host, saying he did not

need such a sight. A similar story is related of St. Louis of France († 1270). But there seems no warrant in history for it. What is certain is that St. Louis himself used to tell the story of the great Simon de Montfort, and to express his admiration. Similar visions are said to have been vouchsafed to Blessed Mary of Oignies, the holy recluse of the diocese of Liège, who died less than half a century before St. Juliana.

One of the sequels of the institution of the Feast of Corpus Christi was the practice of processions of the Blessed Sacrament. There is no mention of a procession in the Bull of Urban IV., nor in Durandus, who wrote his *Rationale* about 1284. But very soon after the Council of Vienne (1311), at which the Bull of Pope Urban really was promulgated, we find such processions in France and in England. The records of the Gild Merchant of Ipswich, in 1325, speak of the *tabernaculum* in which the holy Sacrament was carried in the procession. It is not certain that this was open, like a monstrance.¹ It was more than a century later (1447) that Pope Nicholas V. introduced the solemn procession at Rome on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

Then we come to a still further development of *cultus*—the use of exposing the most holy Sacrament on the Altar for a considerable space of time. Our best archæologists have not been able to find any proof of the prevalence of this form of devotion before the end of the fourteenth century.² It seems to have been practised, after a fashion, in Germany about that period. But it was very common one hundred years later. Indeed, it seems to have been somewhat abused, for in many places the rectors of churches exposed the Blessed Sacrament just as they pleased, without per-

¹ Rev. H. Thurston, *The Month*, July, 1901, p. 67.

² See *The Month*, vol. xcvi.

mission and without rules. The great exposition which is called the *Quarant' Ore*, or the Forty Hours, was probably begun at Milan in 1534—the year in which Henry VIII. made himself the head of the Church, just before Fisher and More were put to death. At first, it does not appear that the Sacrament was exposed during the whole of the Forty Hours' prayer. St. Charles Borromeo, a little later, not only revived, or took up, the Forty Hours' devotions with exposition, but made it perpetual in the city of Milan, one church beginning it as another ceased, and this going on day and night. About the middle of the same century we find St. Philip Neri assisting at the Forty Hours in the Church of the Minerva in Rome. The Dominican Fathers had invited him and others to join in prayer that the writings of Savonarola might not be condemned. He fell into an ecstasy, with his eyes fixed on the Blessed Sacrament. When he returned to himself, he said "Our prayer is heard". The Blessed Juvenal Ancina, Bishop of Saluzzo, a worthy disciple of St. Philip, introduced the Forty Hours into Piedmont (about 1603). His friend St. Francis of Sales had already celebrated it in the restored churches of the Chablais. It was Pope Clement VIII. who, in a famous Constitution *Graves et diuturnæ*, dated 25th November, 1592, first gave the sanction of the Apostolic See to the Forty Hours' prayer. Before that date, however, it was practised by Confraternities, such as the one which St. Philip instituted under the name of the "Most Holy Trinity of the Pilgrims" (1548), and another Roman Sodality for a "happy death"—and in particular churches. It is certain that there was always exposition during these Forty Hours of prayer during some part, if not the whole, of the time. The Constitution just named says nothing about exposition. It goes no further than authorising (without enjoining) an intercessory prayer of "forty hours" continuance all the year round in the churches of Rome, beginning with the Chapel of the Apostolic Palace, on the first Sunday

of Advent, and ending on the last Sunday after Pentecost. But here again there was certainly exposition, though not perhaps all the time. During the next hundred years, many regulations were made from time to time for the promotion of edification and the repression of what was inexpedient or wrong in the practice of the Forty Hours—and we see that it became a settled rule that exposition was to accompany the whole of the act of intercession. At length Pope Clement XI. embodied all the prescriptions and decisions in a further Constitution, or “Instruction” (21st January, 1705) which was confirmed by succeeding Popes, and finally by Pope Clement XII. The instruction is known by the name of the *Clementina*, and is in Italian. It constitutes the norma for the Forty Hours, and its provisions, although not absolutely binding outside the City of Rome, are recommended to be observed throughout the world.

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, the most popular of modern devotions, is connected with antiquity at three points. First we have, in this act of devotion, a survival of those “salutations” or “praises” of Our Lady, which were so common in the later Middle Ages. It was natural, when the Blessed Sacrament was brought out of its reverential hiddenness, to gather around it with hymns and canticles. At first, no doubt, It was not exposed in the same way that we now expose It in the monstrance. But just as exposition gradually became an essential part of the Forty Hours’ intercession, so it became a feature of those devout “salutations”. The blessing of the people with the Sacrament can be traced to the beginning of the sixteenth century.¹ It is specifically mentioned in the Instructions of St. Charles Borromeo,² but must have been in use much earlier. It is confessed, however, by

¹ *The Month*, vols. xcvi. and xcvi.

² *Acta Eccl. Mediolan.*, vol. i., p. 682.

the learned that there is almost a complete absence of evidence as to when the practice of "Benediction" began. It is really a combination of "salutation," exposition and the blessing, which from the beginning even to the present day—although there are rules which must be observed—has depended to a very great extent on the devotion and taste of a particular country or diocese.

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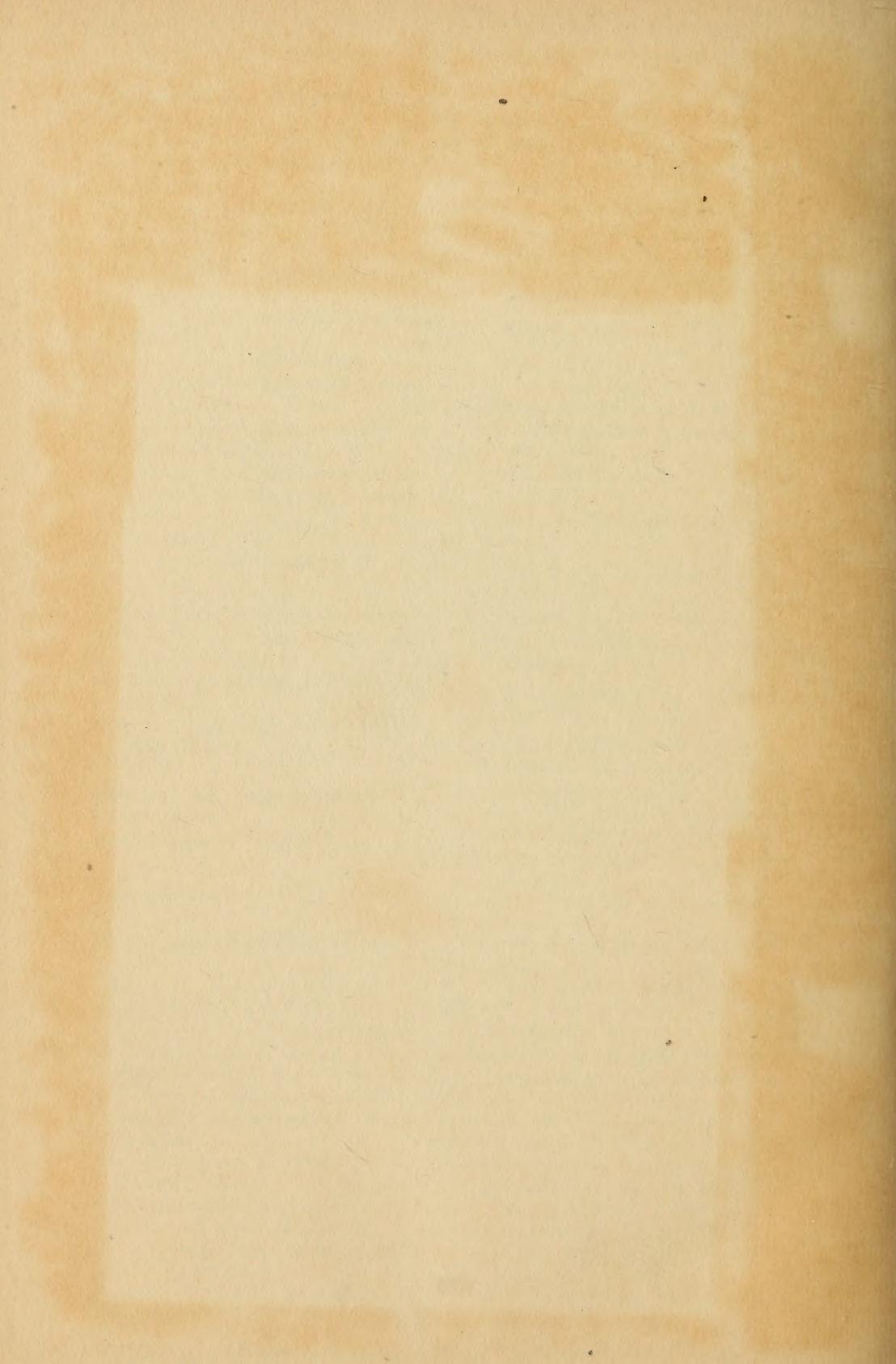
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